



IN THE WAKE OF NAPOLEON



KARL WILHELM FERDINAND VON FUNCK AS OFFICER IN THE HUSSARS

*From a painting by Anton Graff*

IN THE WAKE OF  
: : NAPOLEON : :  
BEING THE MEMOIRS (1807-1809)  
OF FERDINAND VON FUNCK,  
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL IN THE SAXON  
ARMY AND ADJUTANT-GENERAL TO THE  
KING OF SAXONY. FROM THE HITHERTO  
UNPUBLISHED MSS. IN THE SAXON ARCHIVES,  
EDITED AND SELECTED FROM THE GERMAN  
VERSION BY OAKLEY WILLIAMS  
WITH 12 ILLUSTRATIONS    ::    ::    ::

LONDON

JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED



*First published in 1931*

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN  
BY RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED  
BUNGAY  
Suffolk

## EDITOR'S FOREWORD

### THE MEMOIRS AND THEIR AUTHOR

UNTIL "new dispositions permitted their publication," three big bundles of grey manuscript folio covered in small, neat, well-drilled handwriting have been lying for more than a quarter of a century in the State Archives of Dresden. They were known to be the Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand von Funck, Adjutant-General (or principal aide-de-camp) to his Majesty Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony and Poland during the Napoleonic wars. They had been deposited there in 1902 by King George of Saxony, who had found them among the papers of his predecessor, King Albert, but no information as to how the manuscript came to be in the latter's possession appears to be forthcoming. It ranked among the "secret" documents and was consequently regarded as debarred from publicity until, after the Revolution, "new dispositions," as its German editor discreetly puts it, "permitted its publication."

Consequently, exactly a century after its author's death on August 7, 1828, the Keeper of the State Archives, Dr. Artur Brabant, prepared the manuscript for publication, although it was not actually published, in a handsome volume under the title of "*Im Banne Napoleons*" (Under the Spell of Napoleon), until 1930.

Having done so, its editor appears to have been visited by qualms of conscience whether the author had ever written his manuscript for publication. There seems to be little reason for heart-searching on this point. There is ample evidence that on his retirement from public life Funck resumed the service of letters that had been the love of his youth. The carefully polished and leisured style of the Memoirs is in itself evidence that they were written with an eye to publicity.

There was, too, ample motive. Reviewing the incidents of an eventful career and, more especially, the troubled course of an army reformer, in the detached atmosphere of a, probably not altogether voluntary, retirement, their author must have been well aware that he had left a host of guerrilla critics in his rear. He may well have felt the impulse to leave on record an account of his term of stewardship in high and influential office. But being the man as, from his own record, we come to know him to have been, it becomes patent that he could not deal faithfully with his critics in the gate, could not make plain the difficulties that had confronted him, could not, without breach of faith, reveal, as he at times does with ruthless outspokenness, undercurrents that had served to shape the course of events without the assent, the *Nihil obstat*, of the House he had served with unswerving loyalty even if it were to his own undoing. The very suggestion would have been repugnant to him. This may account for the discovery of the manuscript among the papers of the House of Saxony.

It furnishes, too, an explanation for the delay in giving publicity to the Memoirs. It is easy to appreciate that within the lifetime of contemporaries—in fact, so long as it could be regarded as exercising any influence on the course of affairs—publication might well be looked upon

as contrary to public interests. There was probably the insuperable objection of, allowing for personal bias, their truthfulness. There ordinarily is. Subsequently, after the establishment of the hegemony of Prussia over Germany, these objections would become even more palpable. It is only necessary to read the account of Schill's (one of pre-war Prussia's canonised heroes of the War of the Liberation) comic-opera raid or the author's acrid comments on the methods, policy and good faith of Prussia under Friedrich Wilhelm to appreciate that this was not the strain in which the Hohenzollerns liked to have the history of the Napoleonic era written. Publication after 1870 and before 1919 could hardly have been regarded as other than an "unfriendly act." Fortunately, "new dispositions" have waived this objection.

It is, however, open to graver doubt whether the writer contemplated the publication of the manuscript—all three bundles of it—in the guise in which it is presented to us now. It appears to have embodied two distinct and separate works, both probably fragmentary: the one, the *Memoirs* proper, which cover little more than three, but very eventful, years, 1807-1809, begin abruptly after the Peace of Posen and end, to all intents and purposes, in the middle of a sentence with the flight of the King and Court to Frankfurt before the Austrian invasion; the other a series of elaborated character studies, modelled on the French, of the writer's more notable contemporaries—the King, the Queen, some of the principal members of the Ministry and Court which he groups under the comprehensive title of "Characters." The two works inevitably overlap frequently, because the author levies heavy toll from incidents in the *Memoirs* to illustrate traits in the "Characters." This tends to invest the volume with an air of lack of balance and redundancy

which, one cannot help thinking, would have offended its author's orderliness of mind and manner.

Similarly, the title "Under the Spell of Napoleon," though apposite, may at the same time prove misleading. True, Funck and his "Characters" were under the spell of Napoleon in much the same sense as the rabbit is under the spell of the king cobra. But it was the spell of the system, of the era, rather than of the man. The author was, except for his purely formal attendance during the few days the Emperor spent in Dresden in 1807, only in his actual presence on some six or seven occasions during the period covered.

Saxony, securely moored in a backwater of the eighteenth century, lay, during the long reign of Frederick Augustus, the world forgetting and only anxious to be by the world forgot. Even the ferment of the French Revolution had hardly ruffled its stagnant calm. The peasant revolt of 1790, of which Funck gives an amusing account, was little more than an outbreak of rowdiness on the part of some farmers with a local grievance, who, fired by alcoholic and Jacobin spirits, thought they would like to have a revolution without quite knowing why, set out to march on Dresden, and were dispersed by a handful of cavalry—of whom the writer was one—with the flat of their swords. No one was hurt and *no one a penny the better or the worse for it.*

The Elector did not involve himself in hostilities with the Republic until 1793, and then only to the extent of furnishing a contingent in strict accordance with his obligations as a Prince of the (Holy Roman) Empire. In the meantime the nation, recovering rapidly from the miseries and the mismanagement of the previous reign and the harassment of the Seven Years' War, was prospering. Trade was flourishing. The Elector, enmeshed in Court

ceremonial and, according to plan, overworked by affairs of State, which did not matter, was fast becoming mentally atrophied. His ministers, busy in retaining their portfolios and Marcolini's good graces, while filling their pockets, kept the machinery of Government, tempered by an unusually liberal constitution, at a level jog-trot. The Higher Command were engaged in dressing up the army on latest Prussian "pattern" and drawing their troops' pay and allowances with most of their men permanently on leave.

Into this idyll of the eighteenth century burst Napoleon in full career with the methods of the nineteenth century in a hurry—as the progress of some high-powered modern tug in midstream leaves the heavy craft, moored against the bank, swaying and creaking waterlogged in its wash. "*Interim*," as one of the Elector's advisers was fond of quoting, "*aliquid fit*." Things happened, and happened quickly. By the beginning of 1807 the Elector, to his astonishment, and somewhat to his dismay, found himself, with no time for ceremonial, King of Saxony and prospective King of Poland, and himself, a few months later, with all etiquette in a hopeless tangle, acting as host to the victor of Jena in his own capital. He had to make decisions, and make them quickly, so his brain perforce began to work again. His ministers had to deal with soldiers of the type of Coulaingcourt and Bernadotte in a hurry, who wanted things done and had no time to wait for proper channels and little respect for official precedents. The Higher Command were faced with the paralysing prospect of actually having to mobilise their troops and possibly of taking them into the field. Dresden had, overnight as it were, from a somnolent German capital of the eighteenth become a pulsing French city of the nineteenth century.

It is precisely to their intimate description and alert observation of this clash between the old century and the new, between mediæval Court etiquette and efficient administrative methods, between Saxon somnolence and Gallic impetuosity, that these *Memoirs* owe their freshness and attraction. They are the impressions made on a receptive brain, busily engaged in helping to salvage the ship of State from becoming entirely swamped in the wake of Napoleon. To this, and to the very engaging self portrait of the writer which, quite distinct from his motley gallery of, for the most part, eccentric or distorted "Characters," is revealed by the *Memoirs* themselves.

Karl Wilhelm Ferdinand von Funck was born on December 13, 1761, the second son of a court and administrative officer, Karl August von Funcke, of Brunswick, lord of the manors of Groitzsch and Teuchern, and of his wife Anna Maria Ernestine *née* von Ewersmann. The family had been raised to the status of nobles of the Empire in 1732. On both sides, therefore, the writer derived from the lesser nobility of the country squire and court official class, a descent not without bearing on his career. Dr. Brabant is rather exercised for what reason and on what authority he shed the final patronymic "e," for his signature, even of official documents, was never other than Funck. A reason that suggests itself for what it may be worth is, that having seen many examples—see the pathetic instance in the case of blameless minister Low, who was discharged because Napoleon mispronounced a remotely similar name—of the complications the transliteration of even simple foreign names may involve, Funck simplified it for the benefit of his French correspondents, to whom the shorter variation might present fewer difficulties.

At the age of nineteen he was, with or without his "e,"

given a commission in the Saxon Garde du Corps, was promoted lieutenant four years later, but resigned the service in 1787. The pipeclay and ramrod regime, the meticulous fussiness about entirely unimportant military dress and equipment which the local battle-thinkers, in unintelligent flattery of the prevailing Prussian theories, had introduced, and more especially the utter disrepute, on which he later on has many wingéd words to say, into which, again as a result of the purblind aping of Prussia, the military profession had fallen in the eyes of educated and cultured society, had no doubt, keen soldier as he always was, sickened him of garrison life. At the University he found an outlet for his energies in literary historical research, wrote a "History of the Emperor Frederick II," became a frequent contributor to the leading literary periodicals of his day, and entered into correspondence with such rising stars of the German literary firmament as Schiller, Christian Körner and Novalis. He seemed to be settling down to a literary career that appealed to the more studious side of his nature.

In 1791, General Bellegarde, painfully conscious of the low educational standard of the Saxon officers as a body, induced him to accept a commission as a senior captain in the newly-raised regiment of Hussars, to which his innate love of horse-flesh no doubt, and the prospect of active service, attracted him. The cavalry, too, had to a certain extent escaped the prevailing blight of Prussianisation; the light cavalry more especially proved too mobile.

He took part in the Rhineland campaigns of 1794 and 1796 with his regiment. Promoted to his majority he became aide-de-camp to General von Zezschwitz, commanding the cavalry, and remained on the latter's staff when he took over the command of the Saxon Corps in



1806. Slightly wounded by a lance-thrust in the left arm, he was taken prisoner in the thick of the scrimmage at Jena. The Commander-in-Chief reported to the Elector, "Major von Funck in his capacity of Adjutant-General fulfilled his duties with the same zeal, intelligence and energy that distinguished him so favourably in the same capacity in 1805. During the whole of the battle he gave me evidence of his intrepidity and courage, the price of which he paid while leading the troops in an attack on the Schneckenberg. It only remains for me to express the hope that a sphere of activity of greater scope may afford him further opportunity of giving proof to your Electoral Serenity of his efficiency, his zeal, and his humble gratitude."

Jena was the turning-point in Funck's career. For Napoleon had at a glance conceived the same opinion of his efficiency that his commanding officer orotundly expressed. On the evening of the battle he wanted a messenger in a hurry to persuade the Elector, of whose habit of mind he must have been well informed, not to take flight from his capital, because he had no intention of treating Saxony as a hostile country. With his Polish policy uppermost in his mind at the moment, it suited his purpose, with Talleyrand at his elbow, infinitely better to regard the Elector and his country as the misguided and reluctant ally of Prussia than as belligerents on their own account. Saxon officers who spoke French fluently were rare, and Napoleon picked Funck for this important mission. Moreover, the man's soldierly personality may well have appealed to him. A portrait of him by Anton Graff of about this date shows a handsome figure of a man with an eagle's beak of a nose, frank, fearless eyes, wearing his picturesque uniform with the romanesque dash of the light cavalry man—the typical *beau sabreur* of the Napoleonic era.

Funck reached Dresden in the nick of time. The Court was in the throes of one of its customary fits of panic. From what we learn of the state of mind to which each and every emergency reduced his advisers, the advent of a man who knew his own mind, had no axe to grind, and a definite line of action to propose must have been a welcome relief to the Elector. At the last moment an unforeseen obstacle almost intervened. It was not etiquette for the sovereign personally to receive an officer below the rank of colonel. But even etiquette had to be waived in favour of a major bearing personal messages from Napoleon, "the demolisher of all routine methods," as Funck aptly describes him. The Elector, with great presence of mind, got over the difficulty by promoting him subsequently to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and appointing him one of his personal aides-de-camp soon afterwards.

In all negotiations with the French he became the King's right hand and trusted go-between with the Emperor's Headquarters. He won his master's absolute confidence so far as that feat was humanly possible. His polished manner, his general culture and his perfect control of their language won the liking and regard of the French. His tact must have been out of the common, for, by favour of Talleyrand, he maintained his position at Napoleon's headquarters without credentials of any kind at a time when the presence of diplomats was not encouraged.

This intimate association with the men immediately surrounding the Emperor at the apogee of his career invests the Memoirs with colour and historical value. The views he gives of Napoleon's policy and purpose, his estimate of the men who had helped him to win his laurels may not be, often are not, in accord with the considered judgment of history, but they represent the current gossip

of the messes and the, no doubt often designedly, artless table talk of Talleyrand's dinner-parties. As Metternich is reputed to have remarked on hearing of Talleyrand's loquacity in another connection, "*Plus ça parle, moins ça révèle.*"

There seems to be little reason to doubt that as long as the French were in the country he could have held, by very gentle manipulation of the wires, any office he cared to select. The King would certainly never have turned a deaf ear to a suggestion from that quarter even if it had run counter to his personal wishes. Napoleon himself assumed him as a matter of course to be the next Minister of War designate. But, ambitious as he undoubtedly was and galling to his pride as it must have been to see, under a less hidebound regime, men of his own age, and younger still, ruffling it as marshals and bearers of resounding titles, he declined to pull wires himself or to have them pulled on his behalf. He was too proud. There seemed to be something ignoble (his own word) in owing his advancement to any source other than his master's unfettered choice. This was setting an almost archaically high eighteenth-century standard he always admired when he met it in his seniors. In these more enlightened days he lays himself open to the criticism of having missed his chances owing to a deplorable lack of vim and pep which the nineteenth century was, in their more unsophisticated forms, just about to introduce.

In 1808, as Colonel and Adjutant-General, he was in attendance on the King on both his visits to Warsaw, smoothed the relationships between the Court and Marshal Davout, even at the expense of etiquette, and did his best to prevent the success of these visits being wrecked by the sullen resentment of the mandarins and their hangers-on at the Saxon Court, who saw the only justification

for their existence disappearing under the repeated lapses from ordered ceremonial into which the adventure beguiled the King. He made enemies inevitably, and, for all his tact and good taste, he was not, one gathers, the type of man to suffer the pretensions of subordinate fools gladly.

The success he displayed in evading the difficulties without outraging the niceties of etiquette and decorum made his personal attendance on the King indispensable. His success cut both ways, of course, because while it increased his personal influence and consequently his effectiveness, it, to a large extent, immobilized him. Advanced in 1809 to the rank of Major-General and Inspector of Cavalry, thereby entitled to an equal voice with the Brasshats who had hitherto always over-ridden him—for to the King, however much he may have trusted the individual, a Brasshat always remained a brassbound hat—by the weight of their authority, his responsibilities increased. The demands of Napoleon made army reform not so much urgent as imperative, because the old system had broken down from sheer decrepitude so that, as a result of over-administration, as has happened before and since, there was very little army left to administer, at any rate for its main purpose—action in the field. Funck saw clearly that under Marcolini's government by graft and corruption there were many things, apart from the army, very rotten in the state of Saxony, and must have cursed—in fact frequently and fervently does—the spite that he was ever born to endeavour to set it right.

Nevertheless, he did not shirk the work, seeing that at the moment, thanks to his prestige in the wake of Napoleon, he was the only man with the qualifications to strike a balance between the demands of the French and the resources of the establishment. (As an illustration typical

of the commanding intellect and mental mobility of the Brasshat of all times, consider the portrait of his superior, General Zastrow (facing p. 146). It will convey graphically one aspect of Funck's difficulties.) The way of the army reformer is proverbially hard; in Funck's case, the shifting attitude of the Government, that is to say, of the King, made it doubly thorny. Every now and then his Majesty, having given his Adjutant-General definite instructions, relapsed into his obsession for the "proper channels," which delivered him straightway into the hands of the Brasshats. Added to this came the factor of physical endurance. In his busiest times he had, in the absence of orderlies, to run his own errands, to draft his orders in quadruplicate, lacking clerical assistance, with his own hand. It is safe to say that, as at Leipzig, a senior staff officer has rarely been more overworked and mechanically handicapped. None the less he stuck to his work and achieved something—a battery of horse artillery here, another handful of cavalry fully mounted and equipped (after a deal with Marcolini's horse-copers) there.

In the meanwhile, keen soldier as he was, he saw his opportunity of winning distinction in the field vanishing. Because he was indispensable he had to appoint, or recommend for appointment, juniors who, on the strength of service *in the field*, were going to supersede him in the work of reform half done. It must have been another severe test of strength and loyalty of character.

He endured it by virtue of his unswerving devotion to his master. Exasperating as Frederick Augustus' ingrained habit of vacillation of purpose (which he is always careful to speak of as his conscientiousness) must have been to a man of his aide-de-camp's alertness of mind, contemptible as his dependence on the Marcolini parasite, no suggestion

of disrespect or criticism of the King escapes his pen, biting enough at times, in the Memoirs. It amounted to a loyalty, without tincture of servility, based on understanding and human sympathy, that constitutes the sincerity of friendship. Loyalty, duty and allegiance in their eighteenth-century conception were, in his case, as he indicates in that of Graf Loss, the keynote of his character.

After the battle of Wagram the Memoirs end abruptly with the news of the armistice of Znaim in 1809; it becomes more difficult to follow his career with the same degree of detail. He still retained the King's confidence, for he was immediately dispatched on a mission to negotiate Saxony's share in the spoil under the terms of the Peace Treaty, and the King appointed him a member of the Commission to examine and report on Gersdorf's scheme of army reform. But his personal attendance became less indispensable, and consequently there seems no doubt that his influence on the course of events began to wane and that the military and the Court factions, opposed to him, succeeded in regaining the King's ear.

By 1810 he had advanced to Lieutenant-General commanding the first cavalry brigade (the Prince Clemens and von Polenz regiments of light horse and his own regiment of Hussars) in Gutschmid's division, and in 1812 took over the command of the cavalry of Lescoq's 1st Saxon division of the Grand Army, and, after Gutschmid's death at Pulawy, the 2nd cavalry division, the twenty-second cavalry division of the Grand Army. But his relationship with Reynier, the commander of the Saxon corps, whom he admired as a soldier, though he quarrelled with him as a man, became so strained that early in 1813 he was allowed to resign his command "for reasons of health," which were, however, not sufficiently serious to prevent him

from being in attendance on the King at Ravenna and Prague.

On January 1, 1814, the Russian High Command dismissed him from the service for "dereliction of duty," but on his repatriation the King reinstated him and in 1816 sent him on a diplomatic mission to London to negotiate with the Duke of Wellington. It is a matter for more than regret that the Memoirs do not cover, or, as appears more likely, have not come to light for, this period, for the impressions of so shrewd an observer of the personality of "the Duke" and the characteristics of this country would assuredly have made good reading.

This was his last mission. Weary no doubt of the incessant intrigues and emptiness of life at Court, disillusioned of his hope of a career of public usefulness, he retired to his country house at Wurzen and returned to his first love, belles lettres. In the quiet of this retreat he wrote his "Pictures of the Era of the Crusades," which appeared in four parts between the years 1820 and 1824, his "Reminiscences of the Saxon Corps in the Campaign of 1812 under General Reynier," published posthumously in 1829, and his Memoirs, which, whether in whole or in part, have been held under the ban of censorship until exactly a century after his death.

Just before his death at Wurzen on August 7, 1828, one distinction which perhaps gave him more pleasure than his military honours was conferred on him when the University of Marburg, on the occasion of the celebration of its tercentenary, conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy upon him. He had undoubtedly graduated in a pretty hard school.

There are singularly few references to his private and domestic affairs in the Memoirs. One short entry in 1808

records how, "heavy at heart," he snatched an hour from the pressure of the King's business to take leave of his two sons, both lads in their teens, at the depot where they were due to report for mobilization. His forebodings were justified, for neither of them returned. It is on record that his wife died in 1797. All three of his sons predeceased him. Only a daughter, who married a Freiherr Ernst von Blumher of Frohburg, survived him.

With the *flair* of an historian and a man of letters his German editor, Dr. Brabant, has salvaged these Memoirs from the limbo of secrecy in the State Archives. "In these reminiscences, made public for the first time to-day," writes their German editor, "he reviews with a clear and critical eye the actors and the setting, the policy and the strategy, the joys and sorrows of life at Court, and the upheaval caused by that mighty disturbing element, Napoleon . . . They throw quite a new light on conditions and events in outspoken, at times unsparing, language."

It is certainly no over-statement. But the main attraction lies perhaps in the personality of the soldier-diplomat they reveal, of a man who, a keen and gallant soldier, was no fool, of a diplomat who, endowed with tact and finesse, ran dead straight. No doubt at times the zeal of the reformer had eaten him up, no doubt he made enemies unnecessarily, no doubt some tincture of bitterness adheres to his pen, but he saw truth steadily and, considered in his detached reflections, saw most of it whole.

It has therefore been the principle underlying the preparation of the English version to retain so far as possible, bearing in mind the limits imposed by the need for condensation and the difficulty of the frequent overlapping of "the Characters" and the Memoirs, the freshness and



vigour of a personal narrative. Hence editorial interpolations have been restricted to purposes of liaison, rather than of comment. All passages printed in close type are excerpts, translated verbatim from the German original; the rest of the text is only designed to bridge what might otherwise present rather disconcerting gaps.

For the student of history and affairs, a century later, the fascination of these Memoirs may lie in the reflection that, as applied to the abuses against which their author tilted, how often the more all that changes, the more it remains the same thing. It may divert him to discover his own illustrations for the thesis.

O.W.

# CONTENTS

PAGE

EDITOR'S FOREWORD: THE MEMOIRS AND THEIR AUTHOR	V
---	---

## PART I. THE CHARACTERS

I. THE KING . . . . .	3
II. THE QUEEN . . . . .	29
III. THE COUNT . . . . .	38
IV. LOW OR LOSS . . . . .	50

## PART II. COMEDY

I. THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT DISCONTENT . . . . .	57
II. AT NAPOLEON'S HEADQUARTERS . . . . .	82
III. TALLEYRAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE . . . . .	105
IV. ON DUTY—AND OFF . . . . .	124
V. NAPOLEON IN DRESDEN . . . . .	166

## PART III. THE POLISH INTERLUDE

I. A HAZARDOUS EXPERIMENT . . . . .	191
II. THE COURT EN ROUTE . . . . .	201
III. ETIQUETTE ON THE DEFENSIVE . . . . .	214
IV. "LE ROI S'AMUSE" . . . . .	224

## PART IV. DRAMA

I. REFORM IN THE BREWING . . . . .	235
II. THE COURT ON THE RUN . . . . .	249
III. SCHILL'S RAID . . . . .	267
IV. LE ROI EN EXIL . . . . .	277
INDEX . . . . .	287

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# CONTENTS

PAGE

EDITOR'S FOREWORD: THE MEMOIRS AND THEIR AUTHOR	V
---	---

## PART I. THE CHARACTERS

I. THE KING . . . . .	3
II. THE QUEEN . . . . .	29
III. THE COUNT . . . . .	38
IV. LOW OR LOSS . . . . .	50

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I. THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT DISCONTENT . . . . .	57
II. AT NAPOLEON'S HEADQUARTERS . . . . .	82
III. TALLEYRAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE . . . . .	105
IV. ON DUTY—AND OFF . . . . .	124
V. NAPOLEON IN DRESDEN . . . . .	166

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I. A HAZARDOUS EXPERIMENT . . . . .	191
II. THE COURT EN ROUTE . . . . .	201
III. ETIQUETTE ON THE DEFENSIVE . . . . .	214
IV. "LE ROI S'AMUSE" . . . . .	224

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I. REFORM IN THE BREWING . . . . .	235
II. THE COURT ON THE RUN . . . . .	249
III. SCHILL'S RAID . . . . .	267
IV. LE ROI EN EXIL . . . . .	277
INDEX . . . . .	287



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

KARL WILHELM FERDINAND VON FUNCK AS OFFICER IN THE HUSSARS . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
KING FREDERICK AUGUSTUS I OF SAXONY . . . . .	4
QUEEN AMALIA AUGUSTA OF SAXONY . . . . .	30
COUNT CAMILLO MARCOLINI . . . . .	38
COUNTESS MARIE ANNE MARCOLINI . . . . .	44
COUNT CARL BOSE . . . . .	60
CHARLES MAURICE DE TALLEYRAND, PRINCE OF BENEVENT . . . . .	106
CASPAR WILHELM PHILIPP VON ZASTROW . . . . .	146
KARL WILHELM FERDINAND VON FUNCK AS ADJUTANT-GENERAL . . . . .	158
PRINCESS AUGUSTA OF SAXONY . . . . .	170
PRINCE JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI . . . . .	236
BERNADOTTE, PRINCE OF PONTECORVO . . . . .	240



PART I  
THE CHARACTERS





## I

### THE KING

OF his full-length portrait of Frederick Augustus of Saxony the artist himself admits that it is too overlaid with detail. He is conscious that it is over-elaborated. He regards it as impossible to convey his character in a few bold strokes. "The changeful conditions under which it developed have made it one of many facets."

The impression the finished portrait leaves is that of a man who was brought up amid the minutiae of eighteenth-century etiquette and ceremonial, acquired a habit of mind, an atrophied mentality, of which, honest and conscientious as he was, seriously as he took his duties as regent, personally responsible (he was, of course, a Roman Catholic) to God, he was never able to divest himself. To understand him, the methods of his upbringing and the persons who guided or influenced it, is, his biographer claims, essential.

There was, as Funck enumerates them, Commandant Forell, a Swiss, and a Commander of the Knights of Malta, a very polished, gallant man of the world, of the best manner of polite society. The King owed his refinement and dignity of manner, reminiscent of the Court of Louis XIV, to him.

There was Graf Bose, a Saxon, the father of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with whom Funck was himself intimately associated for several years, a man of sound intelligence,

more especially of the nicest sense of honour and probity, in every way the *grand seigneur* of his day, with the many caste prejudices implied thereby. There may have been something a little stiff in his bearing, but in the case of a handsome, erect figure not unbecoming in a man of high rank.

It leads up to an illuminating excursus, characteristic of Funck's manner, of the mentality of the pre-Revolutionary *noblesse*, of eighteenth-century Whig aristocracy.

It would be doing injustice to the pride of birth of the more educated members of this estate to regard them as insensible to bourgeois merit, they esteem and honour it, acknowledge it; in fact they often go so far as to be too prone to take it for granted in the case of the bourgeois because they believe it is essential to him, whereas the nobleman, as such, can afford to dispense with it. They were therefore always fond of selecting their principal business—agents in civil life—in the case of the army, their adjutants and “*faiseurs*,” as they were called, from the ranks of the bourgeois, and had undoubtedly more confidence in them if they were not of noble birth, and saw to it that they were handsomely rewarded. They claimed only that the bourgeois should leave all representative appointments to the noble. Appointments such as General in Command, ambassador, minister were, at any rate as a general rule, reserved for the nobility, but the quartermaster-general, the adjutant directing operations, the councillor of legation, of a Cabinet Council, should be bourgeois, to whom they were prepared to concede a great measure of influence, and who were, to a certain extent, held responsible for the policy of their chiefs, just as the latter tacitly engaged to do nothing without their approval.

Consequently the King was from the first disposed not to look for advisers from the ranks of the aristocracy only. This was illustrated in the rather curious case of



KING FREDERICK AUGUSTUS I OF SAXONY

*From a lithograph by G. Baisch after a painting by C. Vogel*



Gutschmid, who also exercised a considerable influence on his education.

Gutschmid, who later on as a minister had the confidence of his master for a good many years, was an able, intellectual and no doubt an upright man. His hazy origin and his early education had given him a certain timidity which, it is true, he outgrew in time, but birth always impressed him. He and Marcolini undoubtedly exercised the greatest influence in moulding their pupil.

Gutschmid, without patrons, without an influential family backing, had to build up his position on the young Prince's favour. He secured it by always giving way to him, by allowing him, in any case of dispute, to come to his own decision, which he was very adroit in putting into his mouth. He was a man of wide scholarship and had an excellent memory, but he was, in the full meaning of the word, a man of law, one might almost say nothing but a lawyer. The mainspring of his every action was to shift responsibility from his own shoulders and to gain time; his motto, which he was fond of quoting, was *interim aliquid fit*. Agreeably with his view of responsibility, he at times gave himself the benefit of rather lax principles; he took the infallibility of every report for granted provided that the official to whose department it appertained had drawn it up. In this respect he adopted the *quilibet præsuntur bonus* axiom to its fullest extent, whereas he assumed the *quilibet præsuntur malus* as soon as the information originated from any other than the proper official source. If it were a case of correcting an abuse or introducing a reform, all the proper authorities had first of all to send in their reports; these he submitted to the Elector under cover of his own exclusively legal opinion, and a decision was based on points of law; but so far as its execution was concerned, he went no further than drafting the rescript, for which he held himself responsible, not for its execution. He assumed once and for all that the order could not fail to be effective because the requisite proper

authorities to enforce it were in office throughout the country. He never assumed the evasion of law and legislation; the letter of the law was, in his eyes, self-sufficient in every respect.

In other words, the more that changes the more it remains the same thing. It remains the type of the perfect Civil Servant with a legal training. It still persists, usually as Head of Department.

He had ingrained these views into his pupil; later on, at a time when I possessed the King's unqualified confidence for more than three years, I often saw the most striking examples of it. Often, after I had called his attention to an abuse, had submitted irrefutable evidence of it, he would answer—frequently days later—after he had gone into it, “But that cannot possibly be the case, because there is a law or an order on this very point.”

Count Marcolini, who was undoubtedly the strongest influence in his Master's early life, was, in almost every respect, Gutschmid's antithesis, yet—

They had at once come to an understanding and, until the latter's death, were close allies. Marcolini had had the education of a page, he had learnt absolutely nothing except the French language; he was, too, a good horseman and a fair shot. He learnt German of necessity by dint of practice; he talked it fluently but badly, and French with an Italian accent. He was by no means a genius, but cunning astuteness, a natural adaptability and presence of mind, together with a good deal of knowledge of the world and human nature, made up for lack of talent and book learning.

“*Il a le tact de la médiocrité*,” Talleyrand once said of him, and it was very apposite.

He had, with great persistence, set out from the very first to monopolize the Elector, to mark him entirely for

his own, and thus to rule him. He sacrificed his own individuality to this ambition. If by disposition Frederick Augustus had been debauched or had had vicious leanings, Marcolini would have pandered to them; the predominant trait of probity in the young ruler's character, and his no less deeply ingrained religious sense, obliged his playmate and subsequent friend to appear upright and religious; at bottom Marcolini was neither the one nor the other. He won the Prince's affection by devoting himself entirely to him as a friend, by keeping him occupied and by rendering the oppression under which his uncle the administrator, Prince Xaver and the domineering old Electress kept him, tolerable.

Both of them, Prince Xaver and the Electress, were anything but in accord, because both aspired to govern in his name after the young Elector had come of age. To this end the Administrator kept him in complete ignorance of everything a ruler ought to learn, and his duties and responsibilities were painted in lurid colours as overwhelming and terrifying. The Administrator hoped to keep him henceforward dependent on himself, and, thanks to his ignorance and anxious conscientiousness, to continue to govern as his adviser and *premier ministre*.

The Electress Dowager went to greater lengths, for she aimed at crippling her son in mind and body. Frederick Augustus has a sound constitution, a strong physique and, without being handsome, there is an expression of nobility and strength in his features that certainly does not indicate weakness. Under the pretext of maternal solicitude, the Electress aimed at emasculating him physically; not only were all physical exercises prohibited, but he was hardly ever allowed out in the open air, and, when he was, only in a closed coach; hardly to rise from his chair indoors. She had succeeded to such an extent that, at the age of fourteen, he had become quite unwieldy, had enlarged joints, as one can still see from his knees and gait.

Forel seems to have done nothing to prevent it, but Bose to have been quietly relieved of attendance on the



Prince, whom his aloof bearing can hardly have attracted. Gutschmid had probably not at that date been made his tutor and was much too timid and submissive to put himself in opposition to the Dowager. The young Prince was allowed no companionship with children of his own age, he was restricted to a few clerics and his lackeys. The clergy kept his conscience in a perennial state of alarm; he had to indict himself and do penance for every light-hearted minute.

This period of his education still falls within the lifetime of his father, the Elector Christian, and of his grandfather, the King of Poland. Christian, his father, who with great kindness of heart is said to have had plenty of intelligence, was handicapped by ill-health and the entire paralysis of his lower limbs. His attention, absorbed by the mischief caused by Brühl's administration and the misery of the country, was not often directed to the education of his children, who, during the Seven Years' War, were nearly always in flight, in Munich one minute, in Prague the next, cut off from the Court that had emigrated to Warsaw, and grew up under the guardianship of their mother alone.

I do not know who the clergy about the Prince were at this date; if the Elector's subsequent confessor Pater Herz was one of them, they included at any rate one very honest if narrow-minded man. Whoever they were, they did less harm than people afterwards believed. Apart from all the, often childish, observances of external ritual becoming a habit, the strict conscientiousness it inculcated can hardly be regarded as one of the qualities to be deprecated in the case of a reigning monarch.

Amid this entourage, Marcolini, the page, was the only human being in whom he felt any confidence, and no one interfered with it, because they looked upon him as entirely unimportant and (I have this from his own lips) feeble-minded. His abstracted, reserved, subdued bearing confirmed this opinion; the Electress, herself a woman of wit, only cared to have people of agreeable appearance, bright, intelligent faces round her, and it was only from

these that she looked for strength and intelligence, only these had to be kept away from contact with her son.

Marcolini had been of great service to the physical development of his Royal friend. He told me more than once that the Prince at the age of fourteen had, by dint of mollycoddling and lack of exercise, become so weak and shaky on his legs that every one felt certain that he would inherit his father's paralysis.

At length, when they had, after all, been obliged to allow him to go for walks in the gardens and grounds of Pillinitz, he (Marcolini) had taken him up flights of steps or the slopes of mounds, and had for fun left him standing there. The Prince had not dared to venture down alone, had first begged him, then, with tears of anger, had shouted to him to take his hand, but he had always refused with a laugh and thereby had compelled the Prince to acquire the use of his legs, so that in time he had by practice acquired normal mobility. Even in his old age the King was a good walker still and a fearless, if not skilful, horseman; but above all addicted to tiring physical exercise that had become essential to his health.

By these means Marcolini became even more valuable to the young Elector. He was ten years older than the latter, but far below him in education, so his physical superiority was, in a way, offset, so as not to give cause for jealousy. Both the Administrator and the Electress Dowager missed noting this progress because they were too engaged watching one another. The former, however, was conscious of the obligation to give him, the future sovereign, some insight into his future duties. He therefore had access to the reports of the ministers on current business, and they were discussed in his presence. I know nothing definite as to how this was done, but from what I know of the sovereign and his intuitive eagerness for acquiring information for himself, I believe that he is most unlikely not to have profited by this opportunity for his better education.

It was in this atmosphere and this environment that the character of the young Elector had developed. It could hardly, if only thanks to partial success of the amiable Dowager's methods, help being warped.

One main trait, distrust of himself, was in these circumstances bound to be strongly marked. This, allied to the most scrupulous conscientiousness, taught him a perfection of self-suppression that shuns no sacrifice. It was no pose when he could not endure any consideration being shown for himself personally in any matter; it was the last thing to be taken into account, if at all. "Oh, don't bother about me," he would often say irritably when it was a case of putting him to trouble or even inconvenience. "If the thing is right, it does not matter about me."

But whether the thing were right was a question on which he found it difficult to make up his mind—most difficult of all when at first sight his sound judgment believed it to be sound, because then he began to distrust himself, since he feared he might be biased in its favour, and allow himself to be swayed by this obsession. He would then pile up objections and difficulties wherewith to confront anyone advocating it; it was often almost irritating to have to listen to them all over again when one had thought the matter had been settled once and for all on the last occasion. He would still turn and twist it to every angle and was very observant how you countered his objections. If you once became confused in your rejoinders it was completely shelved, at any rate for the time being; but he did not mind if, on raising a new objection, you asked for time to think it over, and listened to the subsequent rejoinder with close attention.

He would then submit the matter to God in prayer, and not infrequently allowed his mind to be made up by such fortuitous incidents, as if, for example, a third party with whom he had never discussed the matter were to express an opinion for or against it. Marcòlini was very clever at exploiting this vein of philosophic doubt that in

the long run would only yield to a sort of fatalism. He never raised a question in which he himself was keenly interested; it had to be raised by someone else, and when, after a lot of vacillation, the Elector had reached the point when the lightest weight would tip the scale, he would himself interpose, preferably by means of a fourth party.

He and Gutschmid, always working in couples, contrived in this way to play into one another's hands. But if every other method proved fruitless, the latter held a winning card by shifting responsibility on to the shoulders of some section of Government officials. If the Elector's conscience were once soothed by these sedatives, it became easier to induce him to come to a decision. But however efficacious these methods might be, they could never succeed in inducing the Elector to commit an overt injustice or to adopt any definitely mischievous measure. His sense of justice and sound common-sense safeguarded him against that.

Troubles of many kinds inevitably arose from this habit of mind.

With this tendency to shift responsibility on to others, Frederick Augustus combined a very high standard of the importance of the office they held; just as he himself held his office of ruler at the hands of God, so, did every official hold office at God's hands through himself. He had great difficulty, therefore, in doubting the infallibility of his choice, and, where not his choice, he still believed that office would make the man as the office of ruler had made him. Thus he regarded the individual as superseded by the servant of the State; he quite forgot that human nature remains, and only saw a holder of office in every official. As such he had entire confidence in everything pertaining to his official functions, very rarely inflicted punishment, and then only after a long struggle with himself, for abuse of official authority, which, with his ideals of office, he held to be impossible, nor did he reward

outstanding service, because, on the same principle, he looked on all services rendered as an obligation. The consequence was that everyone who was not guilty of overt dereliction of duty in his appointment had carried on like an automaton, who had fulfilled the letter, not the spirit, of his obligations, had the same claim to promotion and honours as the most able, energetic and zealous servant of the State. If abuses came to light, the official implicated had only to prove that he had not been negligent in the fulfilment of his official duties to the latter, to be held guiltless.

"The Elector has only one fault," the Russian ambassador, who was very attached to him, said on one occasion; "he neither punishes nor rewards," and he was right.

Gutschmid more especially confirmed the Elector in these views because it suited his purpose for everything to pass through his hands. By degrees he removed all intelligent brains from the senior appointments, only tolerated them in subordinate positions and raised the average of mediocrity, entirely subservient to himself. He had inculcated such a prepossession for mediocrity into his Master that in the long run the latter came to believe that mediocre intelligence was the most serviceable, and could only be disabused of this idea by Napoleon, the demolisher of all routine methods.

Funck goes on to elaborate this perverted confounding of the man with his office at considerable length; before he reverts to the main incidents in his Master's upbringing and the Dowager's renewed efforts.

Since his mother's scheme for making her son dependent on her by weakness of intellect had, thanks to his natural abilities, failed, she lay in wait for the moment when the sexual instinct should come into play. All kinds of pitfalls were at this time laid for him which he contrived to escape, partly owing to his natural continence, partly to the conscientiousness which impelled him to reveal

everything to his confessor. I know for certain that this is a fact, partly from my father-in-law, old Chamberlain von Unruh; who was in close touch with the Households of the Dowager and the Administrator, partly from Marcolini's gossip; but what part the latter played in the intrigue I never learned. To judge from his character, he probably took no very active part beyond noting what effect it might have on the Elector; in his own young days and even as a man of forty he had lived a somewhat dissolute life.

I heard many reminiscences of those days, too, from General Count Bellegarde. The Administrator was in opposition to the Dowager because she wanted to provide him with a mistress entirely dependent on herself; her Court, in his opinion, had a good deal in common with that of Catherine de' Medici. Her ladies-in-waiting and women of the bedchamber were attractive and were not reputed prudes; so much so, that there was a risk of impaired health.

I knew several of her more senior ladies who, in their later years, were fond of initiating youngsters into the usages of modish society. I myself, in one instance, escaped the honour of this initiation by the skin of my teeth.

It became a case of finding a Consort for the King, and the choice fell on the young, light-hearted Princess of Zweibrücken, whose brother was married to the Elector's amiable eldest sister. The wish he had expressed to travel had been unanimously opposed by all factions, and the choice of the bride had been mainly the Dowager's concern.

Amalia Augusta can never have been beautiful, but there was something unusually attractive in her expression; and her figure was faultless. Her education had been neglected; she chattered French and Italian, had musical tastes, danced well and was passionately fond of it. Kindliness was the keynote of her character, but neither her heart nor her intelligence was trained, though her judgment was naturally sound. Her vivacity verged almost on hoydenishness, her greatest delight was playing practical jokes, and

she might easily have carried them to the length of forgetting her dignity, when she might have betrayed a strain of vulgarity into which the predilection of empty heads for gossip often misled her; in fact her frivolity in general was not always immune from folly.

A consort of this temperament was bound to be in marked antagonism to her husband's always formal, often stiff demeanour; to his whole habit of mind. Yet he fell in love with her at first sight, and he always did love her even if he did not always have the same respect for her. Beside her, his impassive bearing looked prim, all the more so because he was always trying to remind his young wife of her dignity by his own demeanour. She did not love him at the time.

The Dowager set about hatching a new plot on the difference in their characters; her daughter-in-law was to keep the Elector under her thumb and at the same time, by reason of some folly for which she was prepared to give her every opportunity, become entirely dependent on the old lady, who would then govern through her. I know all this, and the upshot of it, from the Queen herself, that is to say, from her letters to Watzdorf which passed through my hands.

According to these, Marcolini made common cause with the Dowager and himself made the first attempt on the young Electress' virtue, but met with a severe rebuff. From that time onwards, she claimed, Marcolini had been her secret enemy, and in consequence had undermined her whole position in her relations to her husband. To have the Elector ruled through his Consort did not suit his schemes at all, but she had to be dependent on him to prevent her from doing him any harm.

Despite the repeated failure of her amiable designs, the formidable Dowager had one more card up her sleeve. Funck relates the story of the way she played it and of its reverberations in international politics, not in this context, but in the Memoirs in connection with the mystery of the

arrest of Colonel Agdollo, then commandant of the Swiss Guard.

The whole story has never been made public, but has ceased to be a secret, and therefore only calls for brief reference. The Electress Dowager, still striving to obtain control of the Government, played the principal part. She had conceived the unnatural and insensate scheme of declaring, to her own dishonour, her eldest son to be illegitimate and the second son, the paralyzed Charles, to be the legitimate and first-born son of the late Elector Christian, in order to obtain the guardianship over that sickly and feeble-minded Prince. I do not know whether he was privy to it, but I should doubt it; the younger Princes and Princess Marianne were certainly not parties to the plot.

It is pretty well beyond all doubt that secret negotiations had been initiated with some foreign Courts in pursuance of this scheme, but whether the Emperor Joseph II became a party to the misguided Dowager's intrigues, and Frederick II had wheedled it out of him and then disclosed it to the Elector, I am not in a position either to affirm or definitely deny. It is certainly true that from this date onwards the Elector's policy changed and that from a supporter of Austria he became a warm partisan of Prussia, and that General Stutterheim, at that time ambassador at the Court of Berlin, received the portfolio of foreign affairs and until his death (1789) stood high in the Elector's favour, and, without servility to either of them, held the scales to Marcolini. But when one reflects that this occurred in Maria Theresa's lifetime, and that in view of the known principles of this woman Joseph II would never have dared to become party to such a scandalous intrigue, it becomes much more probable that, bearing in mind the rivalry between the Austrian and the Prussian Courts—because both of them attached equal importance to close relationships with Saxony—they both proposed to make the old Electress's plot serve their purpose by attaching her son more closely to themselves, and either that the Court



of Berlin only anticipated that of Vienna or that Stutterheim was more astute than our ambassador at Vienna. Whether any other persons in Dresden were implicated in this odious affair, and who they were, I do not know, nor whether it had anything to do with the dismissal of the ministers, Ende and Sacken.

Only Agdollo, as the Electress Dowager's principal tool, was suddenly placed under arrest one evening when he was with company, and not a soul was allowed to see him. The short examination was entrusted to two discreet men, Privy Councillor Zehmen and the confessor, P. Herz; the prisoner was probably unable to contest the evidence brought against him. He was removed to the Königstein, where he was kept in not very rigorous detention—he was even allowed to walk about when there were no strangers in the fortress—until his death. He was arrested in 1776 and died somewhere between 1790 and 1795.

After this final revelation of the methods of the She-Wolf of Saxony, the biographer reverts to his favourite topic of Marcolini's wiles to establish his ascendancy.

In agreement with Gutschmid he had adopted methods far better suited to the character of Frederick Augustus to keep him permanently in his power. All that was required was to keep him so continuously busy that he had no time to get through all he had to do, but had to leave a certain amount to his two friends—and they took good care that it should not be work of minor importance—and never to let him out of their sight.

On the occasion of his mission to Italy, Marcolini had been appointed Chamberlain, but he did not, on this account, resign his appointment as page of the chambers. The Elector, who at that date was still a minor, was deeply touched by this evidence of devotion on his part, and Marcolini achieved his purpose of always being in attendance on his princely friend. He rose all the more rapidly, as soon as the latter had assumed the reins of government,

to the higher Court appointments, but because he could not, as a Catholic, hold any Government office (it was only in 1808, after the Peace of Posen, that he became a Cabinet minister without a portfolio), he consistently refused to take any part in any conference on public matters. He thereby secured the advantage of never appearing, in the public eye at any rate, to have a finger in the pie, or to assume any responsibility, and of being in a position to refuse all petitions addressed to him on the grounds that he had no influence in public affairs, and yet did not draw on himself the odium that usually attaches to a ministerial favourite. In the early days he never, later on very rarely, submitted any business to his Master, but, if asked, he gave his opinion as a friend, and in spite of that pulled the wires so deftly and, after Gutschmid's death, so exclusively, that not a night-watchman throughout the country was appointed without his approval.

Marcolini's device, whereby he contrived to wield this power, was that of all favourites, by making himself indispensable to the Elector, by always being at his elbow, a necessary participant of all his recreations, if not of his work, and never to tolerate a soul anywhere near him who had enough wit to entertain the Elector, to give him a distaste for everything in which he could not be the moving spirit, and thereby to rule him completely by force of habit.

So far as men of affairs were concerned he was covered by Gutschmid, and the selection of officers of the Court, summoned for duty every month, depended on him. An army of chamberlains and grooms of the chamber were appointed, qualified for the position only by the proof of sixteen quarterings, but in the vast majority of cases people without any higher, or even moral culture, even devoid of education of any kind, who for the greater part could not even speak French. The precedence, conferred over colonels and majors in the army on them, made these aristocratic upstarts puffed up and conceited, and proof of ancestry was regarded as the highest of all merits, every other

human qualification was contemptuously dismissed, and the honour of carrying a candlestick in front of the Elector, or his hat behind him, or of relieving him of his coffee-cup, was regarded as the highest of all distinctions.

As these people either drew no pay at all or were badly paid, a small pension was their highest ambition, and as they—I refer to the majority throughout—for lack of any liberal education, had no topic of conversation at all, they could not help boring the Elector, and fell entirely under the thumb of Marcolini, to whom they bowed in abject servility, and spoke of as “the Count,” just as the sovereign might be referred to as the King, the Duke, without further qualification. If the horde of dolts should include one or two men distinguished for their intellectual gifts or culture, they either did not care to be summoned or it was difficult to prevent their not being summoned for their month’s duty, or else they were looking for promotion to diplomatic appointments, and therefore were dependent on Marcolini. There were, it is true, men among them who realized the ineptitude and futility of their position and admitted as much themselves, but the appointment was the first stepping-stone to higher honours, especially as the first tacitly indispensable qualification for a diplomatic career, and thus retained its prestige.

But the mischievous effect this army of chamberlains and grooms of the chamber, who at Court fawned on every lackey, but in the provinces flaunted their prestige and the signal privilege of being attached to the person of the sovereign, had on the morale of the third estate in Saxony is incalculable. With a deep sense of their own insignificance the bourgeois officials used to look up to these pillars of the Court, but, when first I came to Saxony, without resentment and without envy, they thought good-humouredly that these things must be, and Saxony was made to look ridiculous abroad by the naïve astonishment of its citizens on hearing that things were not so elsewhere, and by the rejoinder they rarely failed to give, “Ah! but in our country,” etc.

Funck, himself a keen professional soldier, very jealous of the repute and status of his profession, could never forgive Marcolini, because it was his set purpose to wean the Elector from his interest in the army.

There was only one profession Marcolini still feared, that was the military. There was one trait in his character that predominated above all others, an ineradicable cowardice that, excited by the least, most distant alarm, made him forget every other consideration, all his schemes, all his judgment. The bare thought of personal danger, even if there were no reason to apprehend it in the remote distance, made him physically ill forthwith, and the idea of having to accompany the Elector in the field was enough to deprive him of his peace of mind for days. It was an open secret that Graf Totleben, a subaltern in the Foot-guards, who afterwards went into Russian service, gave him a thrashing and that he did not appear to meet the ensuing challenge, and was too much of a coward to take his revenge. It was his constant dread that the same sort of thing might befall him, that, at any rate, he might be addressed rudely; he disliked the very sound of arms in a barrack yard, a musket might burst one of these days, or a ramrod be left in the barrel. The taste for soldiering was the thing he dreaded most in the Elector, and his unceasing endeavour was to wean him from it.

Gutschmid, a timid little bookworm, lent him his support with all his might by dwelling on the harm done by playing at soldiers that was becoming more and more popular among the reigning monarchs. Frederick Augustus, however, had no inclination to play at soldiers, but he liked soldiering; he had fine military judgment, and had a sense of the higher, more lofty aspects of war, because he had plenty of natural courage that was only endorsed by his self-command and fatalism. Right up to his old age he endeavoured to instruct himself in the operations of war; I often discussed them with him and was at the same time astonished by his theoretical knowledge, by his

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Gutschmid, a timid little bookworm, lent him his support with all his might by dwelling on the harm done by playing at soldiers that was becoming more and more popular among the reigning monarchs. Frederick Augustus, however, had no inclination to play at soldiers, but he liked soldiering; he had fine military judgment, and had a sense of the higher, more lofty aspects of war, because he had plenty of natural courage that was only endorsed by his self-command and fatalism. Right up to his old age he endeavoured to instruct himself in the operations of war; I often discussed them with him and was at the same time astonished by his theoretical knowledge, by his

sound judgment in practice, and complete lack of any conception of tactics.

Marcolini would have regarded a conversation of this kind with a moderately well-informed officer as the prelude to his fall because he would have been incapable of taking part in it. He would like to have ousted the military element from the Court entirely, if the Elector would have consented to give up his aides-de-camp. He therefore had no choice except to insure himself from interference from this quarter by the selection of the most brainless, particularly tedious pedants, of men who had never got beyond the "pattern" uniform and parade routine. By these devices they had at length got only altogether second-rate persons in command of regiments and of the army, and just as bad selection persistently yields bad results, these wholly inefficient commanders only promoted dolts of their own stamp to the more senior appointments.

The theory of army monasticism, emanating at the time from the Prussian army, which, as the result of long peace and inactivity, had lapsed into the most ridiculous heresies, and especially from the Saldern school, was eagerly swallowed whole in Saxony. The monastic school aimed at detaching the soldier from all human associations and human sentiments. A brother was to cease to know his brother, a son his father. Taste for more refined pleasures, association with people of culture were to be discountenanced; they tended to make the soldier, so the theory went, effeminate, because they interested him in something other than his duties. Serious study, except that of mathematics, was distraction. The coarse subaltern, who only knew enough to swear, thrash, and count 96 paces to the minute, was a far better soldier. Domesticity, let alone affection for a maiden of quality, was incompatible with the monastic spirit. It was severely repressed by open violence and ridicule. They jeered at an officer who endeavoured to appear to advantage in polite society for a fop and a dandy; it was only excusable in the case of princes, or of scions of the great houses, destined for the

higher walks of life. To dress with propriety or even with a certain degree of taste was rated effeminate vanity. On the other hand, the greatest moral laxity was countenanced, intercourse with slatterns, gambling and drinking bouts, because that sort of thing was only transient; it did not distract, make effeminate, like everything tending to the refinement of manners.

Despite the wrongheadedness of this system it is impossible to deny a measure of logic to the school from which it emanated; they knew, at any rate, what they were aiming at. The converse was the case in Saxony; the windbags who through no merit of their own had, walking in their sleep, advanced to the command of the army felt it incumbent on them to do something, but they did not know what, nor had they the strength of purpose to set about a difficult task, yet it had to be something important. Their aides-de-camp attended all the Prussian reviews, admired and marvelled at everything they saw, and yet had learnt nothing from their discussions with Prussian acquaintances and relatives, nor had grasped anything other than the purely superficial. That is what they brought back with them and expounded to their chiefs. Thenceforward the essence of Saxon military service lay exclusively in dress regulations or, as the technical expression termed it, *adjustement*, which the authors of the new, intelligent system, like their successors, never learnt to spell aright, for after 1800 in official documents, orders and the like they wrote "Aschostement."

There was nothing Funck disliked more than the fashion for the "Prussianization" of the Saxon army with its pettifogging minutiae on every detail of dress and accoutrement. So much so that it takes him some time to get back to the King.

Something had to be discovered for the Elector as a substitute for his liking for soldiering and give him an object for the physical exercise that had become necessary



to him. The chase was the obvious thing, and as the chief foresters were chamberlains as well, there was no difficulty about the personnel. Marcolini had absorbed the forestry and chase department as a whole; the Chief Forester carried no weight at all, he had no authority to engage even an underkeeper, and all the aristocratic personnel of the chase and the forest was made up of people who could shoot hares and talk sport in the correct jargon of venery, but were neither able nor allowed to do anything more.

The whole of this numerous highly paid staff with a crowd of understrappers was kept up only for the chase. The Forestry department proper was under the Board of Finance, and, curiously enough, usually in the department of a financial privy councillor who had read law and often was incapable of distinguishing a fir from a pine.

This was Gutschmid's contribution, who, to some extent honestly, held the view that a lawyer was competent for any appointment and a layman for none, but mainly because he liked to have everything administered by inefficient chiefs, and consequently by subordinates under his own thumb.

So the Elector had to be won over to the joys of the chase and, as he was too shortsighted to be a good shot, perforce hunting was adopted. It gave him some tepid pleasure, because he ceased to have to take his rides for exercise only; it gave them some sort of object. But he was never the devotee of hunting people believed him to be when every country squire, in order to ape him, professed himself a devotee of the chase. He himself told me more than once that he looked on hunting only as a factor in the regime of life that had become absolutely necessary to him.

Marcolini made all arrangements, was at the outset always in attendance, until one day his horse spilled him in a swamp—one of the noteworthy scenes of his life which he had had immortalized in a series of paintings—after which he often allowed himself to drop out, because he



business, which Gutschmid rendered as dilatory as possible by introducing a system of unending schedules, by submitting extremely wordy documents and reports, without a *précis* attached, on trivial matters, and by a procedure that made summarization difficult. As the Elector read everything for himself, it often became impossible for him to work his way through the pile of papers, more especially as he pushed them aside as soon as the clock of routine struck the hour for walking exercise, for the card-table, for the playhouse.

I have seen with my own eyes the immense volume of work he contrived to get through in the teeth of these hindrances, for he was very receptive and worked with plenty of ease and concentration. He did with very little sleep and devoted the hours saved thereby to study. In addition to his hobby, botany, he read the classics, Tacitus, for example, assiduously; good modern historical works, books of travel, refreshed his mathematical knowledge, read memoirs and histories, of wars for preference; periodicals as well, and kept himself in touch with political and general literature. He often discussed these books with me. Occasionally he read plays, French for choice—novels never; “Delphine” is the only one I ever remember hearing him mention.

It was under these conditions, as the result of such an education and in such a rigid routine of life, that the King's character had developed; his duties had become habits and his habits duties.

Thus a hedge of routine and Court etiquette had been built up round a ruler of many natural gifts and a mind of his own, from which he never succeeded in wholly escaping.

It may be definitely assumed that the period of the Bavarian War of Succession was the hour of his emancipation, the date when he became a man. From this time onwards he suffered the tutelage of Marcolini and Gutschmid less docilely; it was only the shackles of habit, of being

accustomed, that he continued to endure, and they are weightier, less easy to shake off, than one might imagine. If, however, he rarely nerved himself to enforce his own views against the objections of his counsellors, he had none the less a mind of his own. And these objections were so skilfully and subtly interposed that he probably rarely believed he was guided by any will other than his own, and when he surrendered his own opinion, probably believed that he had corrected a first instinctive impulse in the light of reason.

Altogether his own and entirely opposed to the conceptions of his surroundings were the liberal views he held on the French Revolution as manifested in its first beginnings. I was not in close personal contact with him myself at that date, but Prince Beloselski told me that when he discussed it with him superficially and without committing himself, he had always expressed very moderate views. General Polenz, who was Adjutant-General, and as a man of the world an exception to the normal type, told me the same thing. An aristocrat to his fingertips, Polenz was always very averse from any limitation of the Royal prerogatives. The Elector, however, reserved as he was and abruptly as he usually broke off anything more than a desultory conversation, expressed a contrary opinion, and seemed in favour of the first moderate principles of the Feuillants; he, of course, inevitably loathed Jacobins. . . .

Later on, in 1808, he once, on some occasion I cannot recall, referred to these events in conversation with me. I admitted that I had at first sympathized with the Revolutionaries. He interrupted me: "Ah, so you were a Jacobin!" As I could not make out from his expression what he really meant, I only protested against the charge of Jacobinism, but did not take back what I had previously said, and merely added, "I was young at the time, and in the case of a young man who cannot foresee what consequences may arise from a thing that in itself appears to be good, those doctrines of moderate liberty had their attractions."

"Well, well," he answered, "you need not be ashamed of it; older people than you may no doubt have approved them."

These principles of moderation, together with his common-sense political views, perhaps determined his attitude at Pillnitz, where he firmly refused, though repeatedly invited, to attend any conferences on a war against France. His conduct was quite consistent with his character; it did not seem to him right to interfere in the domestic affairs of a foreign country, or rather he did not consider himself competent to do so, yet he stated that, if the enemy were to cross the borders of the German Empire, he would do his bounden duty as a Prince of the Empire, punctiliously. So he did, but he never went beyond it.

Similarly in his attitude towards Poland he was careful to look long and anxiously before he leapt.

The Constitution of May 3rd (1791) was proclaimed in Warsaw under Prussia's guarantee, and the Prussian ambassador was the first to give the Elector official intimation of it, and at the same time, on the King's behalf, to offer congratulations on his unanimous election. It must have had many attractions for him, for his only daughter was declared heir to the throne, which she would share with her future Consort and pass down to her descendants. The Elector was fond of the Polish nation, which from his grandfather's death onwards had shown the greatest attachment to him, and even at the time of the Confederation had been on the eve of declaring for him. Everything was, from this point of view, bound to attract him, and the guarantee of Prussia, so powerful at that date, seemed to meet every postulate of statecraft.

Prince Adam Czartoriski appeared in Dresden at the head of a deputation to offer him the crown as the successor of Stanislaus Poniatowski, who, together with the nation, invited his acceptance. A Polish ambassador, Malachowski, a nephew of the famous old Marshal Malachowski, was

appointed to the Saxon Court, and the Poles were surprised and could not understand why in these circumstances he should have any further hesitation.

The King and his counsellors, however, saw important reasons for caution as long as Russia, all-powerful in Poland, had not shown her hand. Without refusing the offer, he hesitated to accept it as long as Russia refused to give, or marked time in giving, her guarantee. He advanced this objection against the urgent promptings of the Prussian Cabinet, and was rightly distrustful of the declarations of Friedrich Wilhelm, which amounted only to words and were no definite surety for him even if they might be for the Constitution. Leopold II, only concerned with the pacification of his Empire, especially of Hungary, still smarting under the exacerbations of Joseph II and of the Belgian rebellion, seemed to have lost sight of Poland, at any rate he gave no guarantee. France, at the time in the full ferment of the Revolution, had, so to speak, ruled herself out of European affairs and did not count. So the regent of a Poland ravaged by so many storms would have had no other ally than the doubtful good faith of Prussia, which at the time was, it is true, on bad terms with Russia, but might easily come to an understanding with her and sacrifice him and unhappy Poland. The sequel showed only too drastically that Friedrich Wilhelm's pretensions to all the knightly virtues did not include that of keeping his word, and it was certainly a wise policy that prevented the Elector from staking the fortunes of his ancestral realm on the prospect of becoming, through his only daughter, the founder of a new dynasty. His deliberate methods and Gutschmid's wait-and-see policy were fully justified on this occasion: this attitude, so in accord with his mentality and so in tune with his passive fatalism, was therefore bound to become the more closely identified with his character.

There is one salient characteristic of Frederick Augustus to which Funck does not refer specifically, though it may

well be the secret of his loyalty and devotion to the man. With all his limitations, with all his inconsistencies, with all his maddening vacillations, Frederick Augustus was always a great gentleman.

Funck records elsewhere that he never summoned him to the palace during the weeks when he was not on duty without apologizing for putting him to the trouble: it annoyed him when any member of his suite addressed him bareheaded in the open in cold or bad weather to have to tell him to remain covered. On one occasion, when during the chase a clumsy groom blundered into his horse and all but knocked him out of the saddle, he called the man to account in right royal fashion. Immediately afterwards he strictly forbade his attendants to say a word about the incident to "the Count." The delinquent had been scared badly enough. He did not intend to have him punished as well.

For all that he must have been a difficult Master under whom to serve.

depth of intelligence or knowledge, to find its vent in trivialities, in playing at soldiers, hunting and physical exercises, and, as weight of flesh and of years put a stop to them, in petty flirtatiousness; in a woman's more restricted sphere of action this same light-heartedness ran to seed in a taste for intrigue and, the less scope allowed for its practice, in a keen interest in little-tattle, futile back-stairs adventures and plots.

Amalia Augusta has her virtues and defects, but proved herself worthy of respect in misfortune because her qualities were her own and her faults the outcome of education, of restriction, indeed of repression, and the effect of circumstances and environment on her character.

I do not know what the atmosphere of her father's Court was, but it was certainly other than that of the Court of Dresden, where the opposing parties of mother and son, and between them, of course, intermediate smaller factions which, trying to worm themselves into the young sovereign's good graces, were watching each other jealously. All eyes were focussed on the young Princess, all were trying to court her, all were striving to ingratiate themselves.

It was hardly possible for her to suspect that they, one and all, had no other purpose in view than her ruin. In accordance with Court etiquette, the whole of her suite had been dismissed and she was alone among total strangers, surrounded by only unfamiliar faces. Whom was she to trust? She could feel no confidence in the formal blankness of the young Elector, not as polished then as he became in later years. Moreover, he did not attract her; his portrait had reproduced his features, but not his bad habit of twitching his face nor his ungainly movements. Her Mistress of the Robes, a real Cameriera major, repelled her by her meticulous rigidity and everlasting admonitions: I have forgotten the name of the woman but have her description from the Electress' letters, which spoke of these admonishments as "reprimands." At one moment she had allowed her eyes to roam about too freely; the next she had bowed too stiffly, at another too



*From the painting by Anton Graff in Pillnitz Castle*

QUEEN AMALIA OF SAXONY





QUEEN AMALIA OF SAXONY

*From the painting by Anton Graff in Pillnitz Castle*





Her efforts to ease her bonds proved fruitless. Without hope of being able to throw off or to endure the shackles fastened on her in the first bloom of light-hearted youth, she felt desperately unhappy, and, as she had to hide her tears, had not a soul in whom she could confide, her unhappiness of mind impaired her physical health. During the first years she spent most of her time in physical ill-health. The Elector's strictness, trained to no less a degree of self-suppression in his own case and to an unusual degree of self-control, had no consideration for physical ailments and, ill as she might feel, he expected her to accompany him in the coach, to the chase and on drives and on his walks abroad, never to miss a game of ball and other pastimes on the order of the day, and above all never to shirk prayers or Court functions. To have twitched a muscle on public occasions or at table would have meant bringing the "reprimands" of the Mistress of the Robes down upon her.

She fared worst of all when, free from physical pain and forgetting all her troubles, she allowed herself to be carried away by the high spirits of youth. That brought no end of reprimands in its train. True, her mirth may on occasions have become too boisterous.

I will only give one instance. At the game of ball with balloons in Pillnitz, at which in addition to the players the whole of the household had to be in attendance, the balloon sped against the head of an officer of the Grenadier Guards and knocked his bearskin off. Before he could recover it, the Electress ran up, picked it up, and planted it on the head of old Privy Councillor von Zehmen, who was also in attendance on duty as an uninterested spectator. The worthy old man, with his lean, bony figure, must have looked a comic figure in it, because he had such a narrow head that the bearskin fell over his eyes and could not be removed without marked displacement of his wig. Not a soul dared laugh, although everyone felt half suffocated. The Elector alone remained impassive during the scandalous scene and continued the game as if nothing had happened,

but it is hard to imagine what a strong position she had to put before.

She placed before the king the influence of her husband. It is, certainly, true that Frederick's temper was changed greatly since the war of thirty, and after thirty years more his temper almost surely that, I feel sure of help, thinking it highly impossible, to resist his intrusion of his way of treating the business, his decisions, and for his sister's children, that he should not be even influenced. There had been no united to help and to make, rather to oppose him, after all, in love and respect to his children of their own just on the side it would come have assisted her but I think a German would be unforgotten to the emperor beneath her in rank.

I have never traced the several incidents of the first eight years of the blessed marriage life. . . . At this time the emperor's state succeeded entirely to the influence of her position of the last monarch. . . . The latter, being of humble origin, and related to none, supplied her with all the local ideas and became more and more independent because they included the deadly hour of extinction, when she would be her own device, by little by little. She began to take sides for and against the parties by whose influence she had been restrained, and was instant on every side, planting constantly to her husband with the object of procuring him for or against one of the parties. But, as he perceived the source from which she had derived her information, she thereby lost his confidence utterly, and it became a principle and habit of mind of his that her recommendations always made the party on whose behalf she was trying to enlist his favour suspect, even if her sympathies coincided with his own impressions. Even if his promotion or some mark of favour had been decided, and the papers actually made out, he laid them aside or postponed them indefinitely as soon as he became aware that his Consort was interested in them.

None of her women gained so much influence over her as Madame Fronhofer, who hailed from Strassburg

and before long contrived to make herself of importance to Marcolini, and cleverly avoided all appearance of being concerned with anything other than her duties. Vulgar and underbred, without education, she had none the less acquired the jargon of polite society and contrived to affect an air of dignity. By clever intrigues she had established her position so firmly that even Marcolini could do nothing to oust her. . . .

But at this time he had to fight another rival for his Master's favour in the great esteem Princess Marianne had won by her intelligence. (This was after the War of Succession.) She beguiled his time both before and after supper by her wit and sparkling comments; he even allowed her small liberties because she was a good ten years younger than he, and he still looked on her as hardly grown up; he never suspected her of trying to interfere in affairs of State. In her youthful light-heartedness, it never, in fact, occurred to her to do so, but she liked prattling on general topics to him, asked for information, and argued the question out. I heard, for instance, from one of the women in waiting that the subject of duelling was under discussion one evening. The Princess regarded it as heathen and wanted to have it mercilessly suppressed by chopping off the right hand. The Elector laughed and rejoined: "My dear sister, it would not be long before you had a one-armed army." His own views were less severe, because, while he was not prepared positively to tolerate duelling, he thought it could never be entirely suppressed in the case of a standing army.

The Princess was allowed to discuss the news of the day once it had become public property, and the severity with which she proposed to govern the country amused him. I myself had drawn her wrath down on me on account of some disturbance that had occurred in a theatre, and in which I was involved. She claimed that it ought to be severely punished and could not understand why the Elector attached so little importance to it, and dismissed it with "Well, they happen to be young hotheads."

Hence, slight as the sister's influence was, Marcolini could not afford to treat it with indifference, and it roused the anxiety of the women in waiting even more.

In her letters the Electress denies that she was party to any intrigue against her sister-in-law, not do I believe that she took any part in it, but the bitter tone in which she alluded to it betrayed her jealousy and the insinuations of her confidants. The latter co-operated, if not in common cause, at any rate under a tacit understanding, with Marcolini, for one sole object: Princess Marianne was to be beguiled into some act of folly which would make her forfeit her brother's regard.

For some time no occasion presented itself, but they watched her very carefully and discovered that a captain in the Grenadiers, a Count Stolberg, who had been on duty for a month at Pillnitz, had found favour in her sight. By accident of birth which made him a remote connection of the House of Saxony, this man was received with some distinction at Court. He was handsome and affected the verbiage of the sentimental school, fashionable at the time. There was no difficulty in giving them opportunities for meeting as soon as Marcolini agreed, but the inept lover did not turn them to account and confined himself to casting agonized sheep's eyes, which the Princess returned sympathetically.

What, however, the proximity and freedom of life in the country had failed to effect, the separation and restrictions of Dresden brought about. The lover who seemed to prefer to worship at a distance, but only felt love's rapture when he could coyly boast a conquest and others could twit him on it, paraded in front of the Princess's windows, and on public occasions took up his stand opposite her and languished. But the sympathies of the Princess went out to him. The carnival ball led to a tremulous clasp of the hands, the lover's vanity to an exchange of billets. But the Princess's conscience spoiled it all; she pleaded guilty in the confessional and vowed to break it off. The lover was given six months' leave of absence



for foreign travel, and for several years the Princess continued to love an ideal with which she associated the name of Stolberg and became entirely immersed in devotional exercises. But this youthful romance left a lasting mark on her character; her health suffered under it and her bloom faded before she was twenty. For her adversaries' purpose it sufficed that she had been guilty of an indiscretion that made her lose caste in her brother's eyes. The relations between brother and sister never again became as intimate as they had been, still less what they might have become. . . .

There was a sequel to this typically eighteenth-century adventure into the *pays du tendre* of polite society which Funck records within the ambits of another "character." He relates it in the same cynical tone—perhaps a little forced—of disillusioned middle age well in the prosaic enlightenment of the nineteenth century, when the "Pays" must have looked very shadowy in the mists of the past, but behind it may be possible to discern a note of human sympathy for Princess Marianne's short-lived idyll.

The Princess bore the failure of these hopes [they refer to the negotiations for her marriage to the Prince of Sardinia, which, in Funck's view, were of course, frustrated by Marcolini's machinations] with composure; perhaps her enduring innocent passion for Count Stolberg contributed to it. But when the latter—probably early in 1784—married a Countess Bolza, she resigned herself to her fate. She had changed so entirely in appearance that it was difficult to recognize her. For all that she was still very engaging company; her eyes, lit by an expression of genuine kindness, were more especially fascinating. The round of devotional exercises, which by force of habit often became a need; a bounty which, often misguided, always welled up from the purest of springs and often involved self-sacrifice; music, poetry, reading, which

meant study as well, and needlework, in which she was very adept, together with her intercourse with her brothers, the routine pastimes of the Court and Court functions, fill up her time and safeguard her from the vacuousness of boredom. She never regained the esteem of the Elector in the measure she had previously enjoyed. . . . But she still retains his affection to an unusual degree, and at all times he allowed her more liberties, and she has stood less in awe of him than any other member of the family.

Princess Marianne, as Funck in preference to the more pedestrian Maria Anna of the German registers insists on calling her, must have been a personality, proof against sourness, when one remembers that she was only nineteen at the time of the Stolberg idyll.

### III

#### THE COUNT

AS Funck remarks dryly, from the "characters" he has drawn of the members of the Royal House of Saxony, the reader will have had occasion to form a fairly accurate estimate of that of Marcolini. This does not prevent him, however, from elaborating a full-length portrait of his old adversary which at times borders on caricature. In Funck's eyes Marcolini was always the villain of any piece. He was to him what the red rag is to the bull. He failed to find a single redeeming quality in him.

He had only one predominant quality—avarice; his pride was subordinate to it and amounted only to arrogance; he suffered from one unfortunate defect—the most pronounced cowardice. Until well into his forties he was dissolute with women; but they were always lights of love of low degree, daughters of poor parents whom he bought, not for cash, but by giving their fathers, brothers and cousins appointments or procuring husbands for them later on. . . .

Even when Funck is constrained to admit that, though lacking all education, his bugbear was "a good man of business and a far-sighted politician," he is at haste to qualify this testimonial.

He rendered his Master valuable services, but, of course, only where his own advantage was not at stake. He would



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COUNT CAMILIO MARCONI

*From a miniature in the Dresden Picture Gallery*



have sacrificed everything else to his own advantage without a moment's hesitation even if it had involved the ruin of the King and the country, but fortunately he was well aware that he himself could only profit by promoting the interests of either.

At the same time Funck has to admit that during the Napoleonic era Marcolini saw the position of his adopted country more clearly than most of his contemporaries.

"Est bien scabreuse, notre situation," he summed it up, "mais direz" (it is one of Funck's peculiarities that he will never allow his hated rival to talk decent French), "mais direz un jour que le vieux Comte Marcolini l'a bien jugée et agi en sorte. Voyez vous, étions une jeune veuve, assez jolie et riche, tant soit peu coquette. Avions deux amants, l'Autriche et la Prusse; partagions habilement nos faveurs, flattant tantôt l'un, tantôt l'autre, ne rendant pas, ne donnant que des espérances. Nous nous portions parfaitement bien pendant quarante ans, profitant toujours, et conservions notre indépendance. S'est ruinée l'Autriche, a été obligée de nous abandonner, étions sur le point de nous rendre à l'autre prétendant; voilà est venu l'Empereur (Napoléon) a jeté l'amant par la fenêtre et violé la veuve; à présent n'est plus qu'à faire bonne mine à jeu perdu et sauver ce que nous reste."

Which shows that Marcolini for all his wickedness saw things clearly and had a pretty, if scabrous, wit.

Similarly, when the Royal dignity was forced on the reluctant Elector, he remarked: "Ah! Oh! Used to be an Elector in ermine, going to be a King in a cotton shirt."

Until the day of his death this is the man who was virtually ruler of Saxony. He held his master's privy purse-strings, administered the Crown lands. He was the High Steward of the Royal Household; as Master of the

Horse the considerable revenues of the Royal studs passed through his hands, as did those of the Royal china factory at Meissen in his capacity as president of the Academy of Arts. Apart from the emoluments that accrued to him from these several offices he had the handling of sums which Funck estimates to have usually amounted to between 300,000 and half a million taler, with which, in co-operation with a Leipzig banker, he carried on a lucrative bill-discounting business and was interested in saw-mills, drawing large profits from the Forestry over which in his capacity as the Pooh-Bah of Saxony he was in control. In fact there appear to have been very few departments that escaped his control, and as Master of the Horse in charge of the Royal stables he had as keen an eye for a deal as any horse-coper.

Everything was *grist* that came to his mill, but, while he no doubt preferred business deals on a big scale, what seems to have exasperated Funck most is that he was never above "nosing for scraps in a galley."

It would be easy to fill a big tome if every several instance in which he allowed third parties to cheat the State for his own enrichment were put on record. But I will only relate one incident because it was really amazingly petty for a man of his wealth. He had a collection of scrapped Court silver, worn-out lace and the like, such as was usually sold to Jew pedlars. To exploit it to better advantage, he conceived the notion of having it worked up to make a plate for the sabretaches of the Hussar officers. A plaque of the kind was therefore turned out in very thin silver plate with the Royal cipher roughly and inartistically impressed thereon; it was supposed to look like chiselled silver and in fact looked like battered tin.

He got the then Inspector-General to submit this contraption to the King, who did not like it, but because the

report stated that the officers of the Hussars had petitioned for the approval of sabretaches of this type at their own cost, because they would wear better than those in use and would therefore save them the recurrent expense of renewal, the King did not reject it offhand. I was Adjutant-General at the time, but as I had served in the Hussars, the King asked my opinion. I showed him the drawback of these tin lids at once; riding at any pace they were bound to be battered by contact with the sword, and proved to him that the regulation sabretache was not as expensive as this cover, which was priced at 40 taler. Zastrow's proposal was thereupon thrown out, and it was from him I learnt, because he felt ashamed of it, from whom it had emanated and what the motive was.

Marcolini had never, before my time, met with a similar lack of flunkey-like servility. Whatever it might be, all objections were at once countered by the phrase "The Count wants it." He showed his recognition by winking an eye at greater or lesser peculations provided they were at the expense of the State or the sovereign, not at his own; in fact, he liked them and only half trusted honest men because, after the fashion of underbred Italians, he only looked upon a man as clever if he were sharp enough to take advantage of every sort of opportunity.

He therefore did not give it up at once when he realized that I was lacking in ability; he regarded it as ineptness and assumed that I would grow more astute before long. As this did not happen he began to be afraid of me, because, in accordance with his own character, he could not bring himself to believe that a man, not altogether a simpleton, could continue to be honest when opportunities for making safe illicit profits were to be had for the asking. He therefore deduced subtler motives in my case and convinced himself that I was harbouring no less ambitious design than to bring about his fall.

It would ill become a belated commentator to suggest unwarrantably that the King's favourite A.D.C. was, in



fact, intriguing for the all-powerful favourite's fall, but it is difficult to forefend the impression that if, in the inscrutable workings of Providence, his fall had come about, the chronicler would have received the news with resignation.

Having once become suspect, Marcolini, acting on the principle that the "Count wants to have it so," took steps to ensure that his rival should not exercise undue influence in any of the departments he controlled, among others the Royal stables.

How slavishly and unintelligently his instructions regarding everything connected with the stables were obeyed, the following incident will show. I happened to be alone with the King out hunting one day when he drew rein and tried to adjust something on his boot because his knee-strap was loose, but as his mount fidgeted and he had to use his left hand, did not succeed. There was no page at hand so I dismounted to offer my services, which he accepted very gratefully. He remarked that he could not make out why he felt so uncomfortable in the saddle that day.

"Because your Majesty's left stirrup is about a quarter of an ell longer than the right," I replied.

"I have always said so, but they assure me that the stirrup straps are carefully adjusted every day, but that it is the fault of my seat as I ride with my weight on the left."

"That is quite natural because the stirrup straps are adjusted when they are new, but the left one becomes stretched by mounting and dismounting."

At the same time I offered to adjust the strap to his leg; he accepted and at once exclaimed that he felt much more comfortable. When the head groom Klemm came up afterwards the King gave orders that the stirrups on all his saddles were to be fitted by those in which he was at present riding. I looked at the man, whom I knew

quite well, as he took the order and smiled. As the hunt moved off he rode up beside me and said:

"Don't think we have not noticed that a long time ago, but the Count has every new stirrup strap brought to him and marks the spot where it is to be buckled and we are not allowed to change it."

"Well," I asked, "what are you going to do about it then?"

"I shall tell him the King has called me over the coals and had simply insisted on it, but if one of the grooms has heard that the order comes through you, *he* won't forgive you for the rest of his life."

"But," I replied, "he can't deny that one strap is much longer than the other."

"We have pointed that out to him, but he only says the King rides with his weight on the left, and that there's nothing to be done about it."

But there were occasions when the King really did assert himself on his own initiative, and even the Count, however much he might want it, could not have it so. Thus in the great tea, coffee or chocolate imbroglio which the chronicler relates more than once with infinite gusto.

It was Court etiquette for a cup of chocolate to be offered to the A.D.C. on duty in the wardrobe. Some had accepted it, others not, and then the lackeys drank it on their own account. Marcolini heard of this and the cup of chocolate was at once cancelled, but the chocolate economized thereby had to be delivered to his house.

The King himself used to call for a cup of chocolate, coffee or tea at his work in the morning; all three were therefore kept ready for him, and what he did not require the lackey took. Of late he had been in the habit of asking for a cup of tea only and Marcolini at once stopped the supplies of coffee and chocolate. The lackeys, it is true, had for some time served nothing except tea and, with

the high prices groceries commanded, had made a handsome profit out of the others. They resented having to forgo it and called the King's attention to the matter. He thereupon asked for chocolate one day, and there was none; coffee, no coffee; so he had to stick to tea.

Marcolini, to whom this momentous event was at once reported, became flustered, pleaded the necessity of economy, and in order to forestall all pilfering begged his Majesty to give orders in the morning what beverage he would be pleased to drink between the hours of ten and twelve.

The King said nothing and let the suggestion slide, but from the following morning until the day of Marcolini's death he ordered tea, coffee and chocolate, so that all three of them had to be ready. But he never drank anything else than his cup of tea.

This was subtle, but it is not the first time that his Majesty, in the smaller details of etiquette, had shown a sardonic sense of humour.

Following the trail of the coffee and chocolate, we become deeply immersed in the details of Marcolini's squalid domesticity, which, entertaining enough in themselves, are perhaps rather too involved and long drawn to follow with profit. But they lead us up to perhaps the heart of the enigma, Countess Marcolini. She appears to have been Irish by birth, or at any rate by descent, which may account for a good deal.

His wife was an O'Kelly of an Irish family that had settled in Bohemia. She speaks English fluently, and is fond of describing herself as an Englishwoman. She often entertained me with anecdotes of her youth, but I never learnt definitely whether she was born in Ireland or on the Continent. She often talked about her education in a convent in the Netherlands. As she has no fortune of her own, she must derive from an impoverished branch



COUNTESSE MARIE ANNE MARCOLINI NÉE BARONESS O'KELLY  
 Engraving by C. G. Rasch after a painting by J. H. Schmidt, in the Engraving Room,  
 Dresden



of the family that only emigrated from Ireland more recently, perhaps in her early childhood, to seek subsistence and recommendations in Austrian service from the wealthier Count O'Kelly in Bohemia. A lady-in-waiting and a Father O'Kelly, close relatives of the Countess, were quite poor too.

She is tall and well proportioned, and, without being beautiful, might in her youth have passed for pretty. What is known as a "*physionomie de caprice*," with lively eyes, a tip-tilted nose and pouting lips, suggested more wit than subsequent acquaintance disclosed. Her bearing was slovenly, her manner vulgar, her head empty, and her education had not even succeeded in giving her the veneer of the manner of polite society. What appeared to be wit was in her case at bottom only irresponsibility, which, as long as it had youth to carry it off, did not become her badly.

During the first years of her married life Marcolini was very jealous; she was not allowed to go into society and to associate with only a few people at Court, and had to spend her time, when his duties at Court called for his attendance, in almost conventual seclusion in the house, where she hardly dared show herself at the window. A few clerics and members of the Household just above the liveried status were her only company, and prayer books and gossip her only occupation.

It was not until the summer of 1784, when her husband had gone to Italy without her, that she got a certain measure of freedom. What had hitherto been unprecedented, then became of frequent occurrence. One met her walking on foot from her garden in the Friedrichstadt to the town. I was living in Friedrichstadt at the time and remember meeting her often; within certain hours regularly. It was patent and struck me and others that she was in search of adventure. The uncertain, shy, and then rigidly fixed glance with which she looked about her, the allurements with which she contrived to attract the gaze of the passer-by on herself, standing still, looking round to give her orders to the attendant footman, the vivacity, the assumed

pertness—in short, all the manœuvres of allurements, left no doubt about it, but I do not remember to have heard of any intrigue.

There was something so uncanny about approaching her that it did not occur to anyone to embark on the adventure. I myself made her acquaintance in the Carnival of 1786 when she probably, out of curiosity to get to know me, because my relationships to Fräulein von Unruh were at that time public property, suddenly took me for a partner in a polonaise at Court. She was still pretty at that time.

One gathers that Countess Marcolini (*née* O'Kelly) was, without being beautiful, rather fascinating in those days and that the chronicler was not insensible to her charm, which may account for many things. It is rare for him—and then only in the case of Marcolini—to descend to gossip that does not stop far short of scandal, but his final allusion to her is not distinguished for his usual good taste.

Twenty years later I spent hours in her company every day. I thought her greatly changed. Almost as penurious as her husband she affected a haughty air that might at any moment relax into vulgar familiarity. She had neglected her personal appearance a great deal. She enjoyed nothing so much as to talk of the splendour of the Marcolini family, of whom people, well known in Rome, *professed never to have heard*. She used to quote Cardinals and Archbishops as her husband's uncles, high officers of State among his forbears; he kept silent and only confirmed it very curtly when called upon to do so. As far as I know his forbears were impoverished nobles in the Marc Ancona who lived quite obscurely, and for this reason his parents considered themselves fortunate in providing for their son's future as a page at a distant Court. He himself, too, when not pressed by her, never pretended anything else.

If Funck draws the moral of Marcolini's life a little unctuously, it must be remembered that he had suffered many things at his hands and that he attributed the loss of the King's confidence and therewith the sacrifice of his career to the latter's hostility and machinations.

Marcolini's whole life is proof that a fortune, dishonestly acquired, can never bring its owner happiness. He had everything to which the ambitions of a private individual can aspire—more than princely wealth, the highest offices, and almost uncontrolled power in a State of some importance, the confidence of his Master, confirmed by long habit, excellent health, for his attacks of illness whenever he succumbed to violent emotions were not altogether physical and he had never had to take medicine. Right up to his old age he had retained his faculties and his senses unabated; his hearing was very acute, his long sight excellent, and he used his spectacles for the preservation of his eyesight rather than of necessity. . . .

But he lacked peace of mind. The tortuous ways by which he had amassed his wealth kept him in unceasing dread lest he might be cheated of it all by equally dishonest devices, and the longer he failed to discover the enemy—because he did not exist—plotting for the possession of his wealth and power, the more anxious he became to identify him, because he attributed the same plans and purposes he had entertained himself to everyone else. With all his wealth he dreaded becoming impoverished and ate his heart out at having to let many an opportunity to increase it slip because he could not bring himself to trust a soul. It was this distrust that prevented him from giving any stranger, or even his wife and son, an insight into his activities as a whole or from leaving a full schedule of his assets. He carried it all about in his head, the whole could only be controlled by him alone; everything that other parties had of necessity to know of his affairs was only fragmentary, and he was tortured by the thought



that after his death many of them would necessarily lapse, that his heirs would be frequently cheated of their due. . .

The mania for accumulating more and keeping everything he could grab intact continued to increase. He thought his position endangered by everyone the King addressed; he strove, ever more anxiously, to remove everyone not entirely in his power and to surround the King, whom he ceased to be able to attend personally everywhere, only by creatures of his own, whenever he could not keep him in sight. The limitations of mediocrity, even of stupidity, ceased to be a sufficient warranty, they had to be people whom some disgrace, some dishonesty, or at least some great weakness delivered into his hands; every upright man had to be rendered suspect in the King's eyes. In this respect, more especially in his later years, he did the State great disservice. . . . In spite of sound health in his ripe old age he lived in constant dread of being taken off his guard by death, and the time he spent in bed to prolong his life he had to filch from the execution of his schemes, and from the vigilance with which he segregated the King. Finally, he saw the hopes he had founded on his children frustrated in consequence of the wretched education he had been foolish enough to give them.

Deeply shaken by the misfortunes of the country with which his own and his descendants' fortunes were bound up, in constant terror, after the King's exile, of being despoiled by its foreign rulers of the treasures he had amassed, of being expelled the country, and of being obliged to subsist on his own means, he fretted his heart out until he died. The news that his son had incurred debts to the tune of 50,000 talers proved the last straw.

He died unmourned and was soon forgotten, but only more overwhelming misfortunes silenced the curse that would otherwise have accompanied him to the grave. . .

None the less, as a chronicler with a conscience, his biographer has to admit that Marcolini's death at this juncture was a public calamity. "On great occasions he

always advised the King well. . . . Marcolini always saw the right course very clearly, but," Funck cannot help adding in redundant explanation, "it did not always suit his purpose; on great occasions, however, it had to suit them because his own advantage was involved in it."

## IV

### LOW OR LOSS

THE most remarkable incident in the career of Low, Minister of War, just before Funck came prominently upon the scene, appears to have been the reason for his elimination.

He is depicted as a simple, honourable soldier, of the pipeclay and ramrod type, who had graduated in that period after the Seven Years' War, when battle-thinkers in their studies vainly imagined they could master the whole art of war on paper and regarded "its practice as nothing more than exercises that held surprises for the unskilled layman only." For the mathematical problems of this art of war human beings were not required, only lines and armaments, and the whole solution of the problem consisted in depriving the human beings of whom these lines had to be made up of all human initiative.

Just as the power loom was invented to dispense with labour, the efforts of the military theorists of this school were solely directed to the creation of great war machines by means of linked units. The soldier was to become not so much a "military monk, as a military ascetic."

The Elector liked Low because he was a functionary with a rule of thumb; he suited Marcolini because he represented "the type of enthusiast that lived in a strange

world of ideas and was rarely concerned with the world about him."

It therefore seemed puzzling that Napoleon should have insisted on the dismissal of such a blameless automaton, because he was "far too well informed not to know that a man of this type would have done his duty with the same degree of zeal whether for or against the French. But no one can know better than I that it never occurred to him to do so. What he wanted was the dismissal of Count Loss and of Burgsdorff, who was Minister of Conference and a Herrnhuter (as who should say a Quaker) and had committed himself to intrigues against him. Burgsdorff died suddenly a few days before the battle of Jena. But because Napoleon had mentioned two ministers to General Niesemeuschel, who was a prisoner of war and hard of hearing, and in giving him the name of Loss had varied the emphasis on the 's,' Marcolini's terror had induced the Elector to dismiss the Minister of War, a sort of massacre of the Innocents to make sure of including the right victim. That Napoleon never meant the latter is shown by the fact that he complained most of Madame de Loss or Madame de Lo."

Low was unmarried.

Count Loss, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, was in quite another category. An aristocrat by birth, he had the grand manner of a statesman of the Louis XIV era. "There was so much dignity in his grand manner that you not only forgave him for it, but came to regard it as proper and therefore felt honoured by the least condescension he was pleased to show."

In his old age he was a handsome man still; his wife had been one of the most beautiful women of her day,

and everything about him was distinguished by a keen sense of the beautiful. The keynote of his character was pride that often overcast his natural kindliness. He rarely expressed praise, but did at times, and reproof only by his silence. As Minister of Foreign Affairs he had won the regard of all foreign representatives.

He had, of course, the prejudices and defects of his qualities.

The aristocratic prejudices of a generation to which he seemed to belong more than to his own were more deep-seated and masterful. When the sister of his daughter-in-law's mother after the death of her first husband, Count Büнау, who died as our ambassador in Paris, married the latter's secretary of legation, La Rivière, his wrath knew no bounds. He committed the only injustice of which I have ever known him guilty by dismissing this man as if for dereliction of duty from his appointment, which he immediately conferred on the son (I cannot quite remember whether it was the son or a brother).

When representations were made to him on the injustice of it he replied indignantly : "*Qu'il couche avec elle—ha' bien, on pourroit fermer les yeux—mais de l'épouser !*"

Yet he was a sincerely religious man. But the loss of dignity on the part of the widow of an ambassador and consequently of one of his immediate subordinates, of a kinswoman of his son, with a subaltern of the diplomatic service was an offence he could not get over.

To a man of his thinking the new Empire and everything connected with it could only be an abomination. He regarded it as the downfall of the aristocracy and the domination of the upstarts, and Bonaparte's policy of fusing the two was particularly odious to him. He would liefer have made his peace with Robespierre's savage persecution of the aristocracy; he regarded the one as martyrs, the other as renegades. None the less he, personally, always con-

ducted himself with propriety in his behaviour towards the French ambassador, but he allowed his prepossessions to lead him into the mistake of allowing his equally proud, though much less restrained, wife undue influence. She, entirely under the spell of the blandishments of the Russian, Prussian, and English ambassadors, carried her aversion from all things French to the improper length of publicly humiliating the Ambassador Durand, who was an excellent man, and his more resentful secretary of legation, Dumoutier. Napoleon, prejudiced against him by the latter, made the minister's dismissal one of the conditions of peace.

Count Loss's magnanimity showed up in a very serene light here. Inevitable as he knew his dismissal to be, he continued even after the battle of Jena to devote himself until the last moment no less zealously to the Elector's service and entirely in the spirit of the New Era, as if he had adapted himself to it from the first, and this, not with the idea of conciliating Napoleon, which he knew definitely to be impossible, but out of sheer loyalty, because his master had at that juncture no one qualified to take his place and because he, though certain of his own discharge, refused to desert him in the hour of need as long as he could be of service. No one can know that better than I, because at that time I was working with and under him continuously.

I have often admired his self-restraint; deeply wounded as he must have felt, he bore himself with a composure and dignity that showed no trace of personal resentment. Later on and up to the day of his death he was true to himself, and it is worthy of record that, although, in spite of his considerable estates, he was not a wealthy man, he declined from the moment he surrendered his portfolio to accept his salary of 12,000 talers which the King transmitted to him regularly at due date, but on every occasion insisted on the bearer accepting the customary present just as if he had taken receipt of the money. . . .

There are passages in the Memoirs that suggest that these obsolete eighteenth-century notions of loyalty and

honour he appreciated so highly materially affected the writer's career, although himself emphatically a man of the New Era. Here again, perhaps, the more all that changes the more in essentials it remains the same thing.

PART II  
COMEDY





# I

## THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT DISCONTENT

THE Memoirs open abruptly with a review of the internal conditions of Saxony after the battle of Jena and the collapse of Prussia and her Allies had made Napoleon master of Germany and of Central Europe as far as the Vistula. Its very abruptness suggests that the manuscript represents a part—a fragment—of a perhaps incomplete work in which the author, in the detachment of retirement and the increasing weight of years, has set out to review, with the leisureliness and discrimination of a trained man of letters, the incidents of an eventful life with, usually, the tolerant philosophy experience had taught him—usually, because in the degree of philosophy Marburg had conferred on him there still remains a good deal of the dash and daring of the light cavalry man in the slashing criticisms he occasionally launches at old-time abuses and erstwhile opponents.

The date, as has been pointed out, represents a turning-point in his life as it does in Napoleon's career. Wounded and taken prisoner in the battle of Jena the Emperor himself had dispatched him post-haste to Dresden to assure Frederick Augustus and his fluttered Court that there was no occasion for flight, that he was coming, *not as a conqueror breathing vengeance, but in the guise*

of a liberator to release a natural Ally from the stranglehold of Prussian domination.

His mission had brought relief to a distracted Court and had indicated a definite line of policy to a bemused Government. Inevitably, as the man of Napoleon's choice as intermediary for averting trouble, he became the man of the moment, had been promoted Lieutenant-Colonel and appointed personal aide-de-camp and Adjutant-General to the King.

Immediately afterwards he had been attached to the suite of the Foreign Minister, Graf Bose—his first diplomatic mission—to arrange the preliminaries of the Peace of Posen. He had obtained his first insight into the administration, or maladministration, of the army, and of the methods of a system of Government based on corruption, complicated by *etiquette*. He could no more have helped contrasting the efficiency and purposefulness of Napoleon's methods with the vacillation and futility of Saxon administration than he could forbear being impressed by the cosmopolitan air of ease and culture of the men at Napoleon's Headquarters as compared with the provincial uncouthness and boorishness of the outstanding figures at the Court of Dresden. He is about to see the eager, impetuous Frenchman of the dawning nineteenth century, forged in the fierce fires of the Revolution, in personal contact with Saxony "waddling along in the potbellied equanimity" of the eighteenth, and to watch Napoleon in a hurry making Saxony, for the purpose of his Polish policy, a country, in accordance with the light of his times, "fit for democracy to live in."

Assuming—as there is some reason for assuming, because the note of the *Memoirs* is throughout historical rather than personal—that they began with their writer's

first entry into the public life of his adopted country, it is hardly likely that he would have omitted all account of the important events immediately preceding this survey of the internal conditions of Saxony. At this particular juncture, however, these "thoughts on the present discontent" would be wholly apposite.

His accounts of the disillusionments and disappointments which the conclusion of Peace evoked among all classes of the population and the reasons therefor seem at all times to strike a curiously modern note. As a genuine patriot, any activity he regarded as akin to "profiteering" always disgusted him, though in this instance his strictures may be exacerbated by the rather jaundiced bias of the artist who finds the work in which he had collaborated subjected to unfair criticism.

Incidentally, it may be instructive to note how the more the methods of the "profiteering" may have changed the more the phenomenon itself remains the same thing.

Peace was concluded, the alien administration of the country had been terminated, and Saxony had been declared a kingdom, but no one seemed very pleased about it all. An event that two months previously would have been hailed with the greatest rejoicings met with a chilly reception. Our incomprehensible vacillation had discredited us on every side. Instead of the profitable peace we might have concluded before Napoleon had made himself master of the country as far as the Warthe, we had one we had had to buy at the cost of substantial sacrifices. Our dilatoriness had brought our Allies no advantage. They gave us no credit for it; on the contrary, they hated us the more sincerely in proportion to the certainty with which before the war they had counted on the prospect of grabbing possession of our most flourishing provinces

and, when this hope proved illusory, of indemnifying them at our expense under the terms of a future peace.

For two months our country had had to endure all the burdens of a conquered State while the people from day to day nursed flattering hopes of peace. When at length it materialized they thought they had got over the worst, were counting on an entirely different state of things, and were peevish at only having achieved a peace that might easily expose us to the vengeance of our whilom Allies.

The Prussian officers who, as prisoners of war, had found patronage, active support, and hospitable reception all over Saxony and, with the happy-go-lucky disposition of Napoleon, who never troubled about anything beyond the rapid liquidation of his campaigns, had enjoyed complete liberty and could afford to await their return to their corps without anxiety, requited Saxon hospitality by tall talk about victories won on the Vistula, about the advance of Russian, Prussian, English and Swedish forces on the Oder and the Elbe.

Everything contributed to play upon the feelings of the populace. The aristocracy and the commercial interests clung to England, and things soon reached such a pitch that they did not trouble to disguise their dislike of the Peace. Graf Bose was an object of hatred throughout the country, and they included him in their suspicions of corruption behind which they disguised their humiliation at mischances brought about by their own fault.

Everyone refused to admit that our misfortunes were the outcome of our own shortsightedness, of our habit of refusing to be taught, of remodelling the world like sedentary pundits at their desks. When things were at their worst, everyone was shouting for an ambassador to be accredited to the Emperor's Headquarters, but not a man showed any inclination to undertake the task. Now that Graf Bose had become Minister of Foreign Affairs, they all howled in unison that he had only applied for the appointment to get office. Every one declined to acknowledge the real and very valuable services he had



COUNT CARL BOSE

*From an engraving and painting by J. H. Schmidt, in the Engraving Room, Dresden*



rendered. They indicted him for not having concluded peace at an earlier date and yet were very upset that he had negotiated peace at all. No one would appreciate the great difficulties with which our ill-starred habit of marking time had hampered him just at a juncture when waste of time was most damaging to our interests. All and sundry were ill-pleased, yet not a man knew what he really did want; what, in his view, ought to have been done.

They were only all agreed on one point, to wit that they had wanted something entirely other than what they had got.

The one mistake Graf Bose did make, his insistence on the inclusion of the entire emancipation of (Roman) Catholic worship in the terms of the Peace treaty, did him and the King the most material disservice. The article only served the opposition as a lever to stir up public opinion and to rouse for the first time, a thing hitherto unprecedented in Saxony, a feeling of want of confidence in the Government on the part of the people.

Pamphlets and pasquinades flooded the country; I was the first to call attention to this apparently futile, but in the long run very effective, weapon of the Opposition, but it met with scant attention. To prohibit publications of this nature was repugnant to the spirit of Saxon liberty, though they would have done it without hesitation once Napoleon had insisted on it. And it would only have served the purpose of giving the lampoons a bigger circulation surreptitiously. But would it not have been possible to have had one or two writers to repel these attacks with its own weapons? That was what my proposal amounted to. But there was no precedent for anything of the kind and consequently they could not make up their minds to give such an unusual course even a moment's consideration.

In fact the occasion was a revelation of the attitude of mind in which our Government had so far regarded the People. They looked upon it as something entirely auto-



matic that, with its complete incapacity for reflection, could be moved about the board as best suited Government's purpose. Under the Gutschmid-Marcolini regime this view had been regarded as a general axiom, and the King had, without questioning it, adopted it as one of his principles. That, in spite of such a mischievous misconception, Government was none the less so gentle and that the liberties of its subjects were never violated was due to the spirit of the Saxon sovereigns, who invariably regarded the Constitution as inviolable, and to the intrinsic soundness of the Constitution itself.

At that time I hoped at any rate to effect this much; to induce Government on such important occasions just to address the People, to instruct it by way of proclamation, as other States did, as to the position of things. The idea appealed to Count Bose, but even he was unable to put it into effect. The People was regarded, once and for all, as a child for whom we measure out and prescribe the things it has got to have and to do, but in blind faith that daddy knows better and is far wiser, must be seen and not heard, and may never inquire what we propose to do with it and what our intentions are. The suggestion that the child might be growing up and capable of thinking for itself was a new idea and, for that very reason a foolish, in fact, a pernicious notion.

When one or two regiments in Posen, of the contingent 6000 strong we had to send to the Corps besieging Danzig, incited by civilians of Prussian sympathies, refused to cross the Warthe, broke into open mutiny, fired on their commanding officers, and were only brought to heel thanks to the better spirit prevailing in the "König" Cuirassier regiment, when one battalion of the 1200 contingent with which we were reinforcing Prince Jérôme's Corps threw down their arms and allowed themselves to be taken prisoners, the King became alarmed. He was anxious to address the people and the troops, but he was answered that they had to be drafted to the War Office, to the Ministry of the Interior and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the

Privy Council, and both Count Hopffgarten and the Ministers of the Conference were in opposition to Count Bose. Consequently such proclamations as were published were anything rather than suited to reconcile the People with the Government's policy. They were not couched in a style in which a sovereign would address his people with dignity, but in confidence and in a tone calculated to inspire confidence; they were orders drafted in an absurdly pedantic style that did not deign to do more than to announce the arbitrary decisions of the Government.

In despair at his failure to do anything effective, Graf Bose himself set a few camp-fire ditties to popular tunes which in the long run were sold at the booths in the market-place and did not altogether miss fire, because they were taken up by the troops and ousted the songs belauding nothing but Prussian victories, and inspired one or two rhymesters of the common measure to a new style of celebrating Frederick Augustus and Napoleon in lieu of Prussia and the Muscovites. . . .

It is a very common weakness of individuals as of communities that, as long as the pressure of a great misfortune endures, no sacrifices appear too great to shake it off, but once they are rid of it, they begrudge the smallest sacrifice they have been called upon to make. If they happen to suffer some slight discomfort afterwards they make much more ado about it than about the burden that had previously crushed them.

This was exactly what happened in Saxony after the Peace of Posen. The whole population was disappointed because it did not straightway waft them into a state of incomparably greater prosperity than they had enjoyed before the war. Every individual, too, attributed every trifling inconvenience he suffered to the change of policy and to being on friendly terms with Napoleon. He never wasted a thought on the reasonableness of this view nor on consideration of the circumstances; every man made the most of his grievance without really knowing what

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When one or two regiments in Posen, of the contingent 6000 strong we had to send to the Corps besieging Danzig, incited by civilians of Prussian sympathies, refused to cross the Warthe, broke into open mutiny, fired on their commanding officers, and were only brought to heel thanks to the better spirit prevailing in the "König" Cuirassier regiment, when one battalion of the 1200 contingent with which we were reinforcing Prince Jérôme's Corps threw down their arms and allowed themselves to be taken prisoners, the King became alarmed. He was anxious to issue proclamations to the people and the troops, but unfortunately tradition demanded that they had to be drafted by the Cabinet of Internal Affairs and by the

Privy Council, and both Count Hopffgarten and the Ministers of the Conference were in opposition to Count Bose. Consequently such proclamations as were published were anything rather than suited to reconcile the People with the Government's policy. They were not couched in a style in which a sovereign would address his people with dignity, but in confidence and in a tone calculated to inspire confidence; they were orders drafted in an absurdly pedantic style that did not deign to do more than to announce the arbitrary decisions of the Government.

In despair at his failure to do anything effective, Graf Bose himself set a few camp-fire ditties to popular tunes which in the long run were sold at the booths in the market-place and did not altogether miss fire, because they were taken up by the troops and ousted the songs belauding nothing but Prussian victories, and inspired one or two rhymesters of the common measure to a new style of celebrating Frederick Augustus and Napoleon in lieu of Prussia and the Muscovites. . . .

It is a very common weakness of individuals as of communities that, as long as the pressure of a great misfortune endures, no sacrifices appear too great to shake it off, but once they are rid of it, they begrudge the smallest sacrifice they have been called upon to make. If they happen to suffer some slight discomfort afterwards they make much more ado about it than about the burden that had previously crushed them.

This was exactly what happened in Saxony after the Peace of Posen. The whole population was disappointed because it did not straightway waft them into a state of incomparably greater prosperity than they had enjoyed before the war. Every individual, too, attributed every trifling inconvenience he suffered to the change of policy and to being on friendly terms with Napoleon. He never wasted a thought on the reasonableness of this view nor on consideration of the circumstances; every man made the most of his grievance without really knowing what



he was complaining about. A few individuals might see things from the right angle, but all moderates were suspected of Franco-mania and studiously cold-shouldered as such.

Many had contrived to make quite a good business out of the war. It was they who grumbled loudest against the Government's policy; others discovered a lot of drawbacks to it which in the long run were one and all self-seeking. For more than two years manipulation of the corn quotations had brought about an appreciable rise in prices. The war and the passage of foreign troops had, instead of raising, suddenly lowered the price of wheat, because everyone, in the first scare of confiscation, flung his heavy stocks, held up for several harvests, on the market. All the landed interests therefore hated a state of things that deprived them of a profit they had regarded as certain. Peace, it is true, had not affected the position, but the blind wrath of disappointed profiteers clamoured for some scapegoat and could only find one in peace with the French, without taking into consideration that this event alone had assured them security of title. Their futile wrath craved revenge, the people responsible for low prices ought to bear the brunt of it and, when the danger was over, they believed that the peace which was the only thing that could have saved impotent Saxony had been essential to Napoleon's salvation, and they called what was only a setback for illicit profiteering treachery to the Fatherland and to the Cause.

It is disgusting to have to discuss such almost incredible folly, but any man who has noted the insensate demands of self-seeking current in the world will see nothing extraordinary in it, even less in the support given by all other interests, even by those who had complained most loudly of the inflation of prices, to the resentment of the corn profiteers. Every one who had to put up with a petty inconvenience of any kind fooled himself into believing that the general grievance voiced his own and joined the chorus of malcontents.

Profiteering discovered it was being attacked on several other fronts. To the ruin of our textile trade the English had for years been buying our combed wool at prices the home manufacturer could not afford to pay. The embargo on exports crippled his business and the price of wool slumped.

Business in real estate had degenerated into downright gambling. People bought estates without any money to sell them for a quick return. As it was impossible to invest capital at more than 3 per cent., real property had risen to prices out of all proportion to its value and entirely fantastic because they were based on the current rate of interest and inflated prices. A man who happened to have purchased an estate about this date, and on top of it, as was usually the case, had to find substantial sums to complete purchase, found himself ruined at one fell swoop because real property had suddenly slumped to its intrinsic value, and on top of that had to carry the imposts for billeting and transport.

A Herr von Wredeck of Berlin—to adduce only one example—had purchased the Dittersbach estate near Dresden for 135,000 Reichstalers and had paid 50,000 down. Squeezed by the war imposts in Prussian territory, he had to sell the estate in Saxony in a hurry; it fetched 85,000 Reichstalers, so that within a period of ten months he had to sacrifice the exact sum he had paid down. Many people who had dealt even more rashly did not recover even that much, and because they had borrowed the money and the capitalists who had found it lost theirs.

People, too, who had for years been making money by speculating in corn and wool had not all really acquired wealth. The rise in the standard of living, as the purchasing power of money declined, the rise in price of the necessities of life and the comparative cheapness of foreign, especially of English, goods, had through innumerable channels drained money out of the country again or into the tills of the traders. Even before the war the aristocracy had continued to go downhill and more than

half the manors of Saxony had passed into the possession of traders or newly-enriched contractors. But every one refused to see or to appreciate all that. They were all obsessed by the discomforts of the moment and hated the Peace because it rubbed these discomforts in.

The country clergy, whose incomes depended on the yield of their glebe, had, like the landed gentry, changed their way of life and there was a good deal of luxury and display in the hitherto modest style of Saxon parsonages. Clerical humility had given place to a pride that made itself rather ridiculous by aping the aristocracy. Of every ten country parsons you would find at least one, if not more, who had married a lady of quality. The reduction of their stipends by the lower prices ruling for agricultural products embittered this class, that exercises such a powerful influence over country folk. The clergy were preaching hatred against Napoleon everywhere and extolling war against him as making for edification.

The trading community had, as in the course of every war, suffered as individuals and only temporarily from the interruption of business, but was indemnified a hundred times over by the sudden rise in prices of cheap foreign goods. None the less it was the merchants who wailed most loudly. The artisans suffered from a reduced demand for their labour and gave vent to no less noisy lamentations.

It was precisely the classes who were most severely hit that bore the real burdens most quietly. They were those people who, without having participated in the previous and, to some extent, still prevailing advantages of the others, and without having a countervailing remedy to hand, were, in common with the latter, burdened by billeting, imposts and contributions.

So certain it is *that genuine distress never gives utterance to such shrill squeals as disappointed profiteering.*

It is only too obvious that there was not the slightest feeling of patriotism, however misguided, at the bottom of these lamentations. It was nothing save and except

egotism that made the squealers vocal. It called for hardships of a very different kind than those brought about, for the most part, by their own default, to open the Saxons' eyes, to remind them that they were a nation, to rekindle the spark of patriotism, almost overlaid by luxurious living and profiteering, to a blaze. The far harder fate of the neighbouring States of Prussia and Westphalia failed to induce them to take a less short-sighted view of their own condition, a sure proof that every individual was thinking only of himself, not of his country, and that it was only resentment against the men who happened to have put a term to their profiteering that inspired them. They only clamoured for vengeance on the French as soon as they realised that peace had not brought the earlier joys of profiteering in its train. But this futile resentment later on gradually began to masquerade as patriotism. If a wave of a magician's wand had at that moment conjured up the events that happened seven years later, if the French had been expelled from Germany in 1807, and Saxony had remained as it then was, a relapse into profiteering and all the old-time abuses would soon have shown how much that self-styled patriotism was worth.

This surly resentment against everything French prevented us from adapting ourselves to the new situation, from drawing what advantage there might be therein, from at any rate easing the strain as far as might be. It also threw a very unflattering light on the Saxon character and brought considerable disadvantages and a succession of humiliations upon us. If the French authorities made any demand, however trivial and however easy to satisfy, their request was sure to be refused on the pretext that it was impossible of fulfilment. The French, unaccustomed to being baldly refused, though ready enough to drive a bargain, would then become insistent in their demands, but were always met by a lot of pettifogging obstructions until they lost patience and either took what they wanted by force of arms or reduced the authorities, under the threat of even personal violence, to such a state of terror



that they supplied and did a good deal more than they had in the first instance been called upon to do.

Hence the French got it in their heads that Saxon resources were inexhaustible and could furnish a great deal more than they had imagined, but that the ill-will that refused even equitable demands could only be countered by violence and bullying. They declined henceforward to accept any excuses, would not listen to even reasonable excuses, because they regarded them as shuffling, and contrived to exact unfair and almost impossible demands.

The several local authorities, capable of behaving with intelligence and reasonableness, not only saved their districts appreciable sums, but spared their inhabitants exactions and maltreatment. All they had to do was to keep their heads at the initial requisition, usually accompanied, in view of the generally accepted axiom that nothing was to be got out of Saxony by placatory methods, by harshness and threats, and not to refuse it at the outset, but to answer quietly that they would do all it was possible to do. When once the French realised that they were, in fact, prepared to meet their demands, and if they received an instalment of what they had in the first instance demanded and did not meet with an unfriendly or evasive attitude, their distrust wore off in quite a short time. It was not difficult then to strike a bargain with them on the basis of a half or, say, of a quarter, and even less. The Saxons thereby gained the advantage—often more important in itself—of being free to take their own steps for the supply of the inevitable minimum without interference, a precaution the neglect of which cost Saxony millions of money. Almost everywhere the subordinate authorities missed this chance; under Gutschmid's system they had been accustomed and trained to make exhaustive inquiries and send in long reports on expenditure amounting to only a few shillings, and therefore lacked all initiative.

A trifling requisition of a hundred rations would often upset a whole province owing to the recalcitrance or clumsiness of the authorities. The first answer always

was that it was impossible, the second that inquiries would have to be made. The temper of the requisitioning party had by this time become thoroughly ruffled, so they took what might have been conceded to them without any difficulty by force of arms, and probably seized a good deal more than had been requisitioned, after ten times its value had been wasted and damaged in the process. As reprisals for having been refused the small amount required, the French thereupon doubled their demands and claimed indemnities and fines, the most unreasonable exactions which with a little intelligence might have been averted. But, as the upshot of it, the Saxons were made to look an underhand cowardly people who could not be induced to do anything by fair means, but could be forced to do anything by foul.

The juristic schedularisation Gutschmid had introduced throughout the administrative system was revealed in its full shortcomings. No measure was allowed or was regarded as legal without the sanction of some judicial authority or other. Gutschmid had not confined himself to making these two authorities distinct, but had, in some curious way, interlocked them, with the result that one was always being jammed by the other and consequently that, in every not purely routine case, the one authority had to wait for the approval of the other. If, however, the matter was too urgent for instructions to be received, the supreme judicial authority of the province alone was competent to give an immediate decision.

But the parties invested with this authority were, almost exclusively, lawyers. If a matter were referred to them they set about to consider it as they would a lawsuit between the French Commissioner who had made the requisition and the financial officials who had refused it, just as if they had to deliver judgment between plaintiff and defendant. No pressure of circumstances availed to rattle them out of this ponderous imperturbability.

We were suffering from a superfluity of provincial officials. But the district inspector, the chief guardian,

the overseer, the district commissioner, and all the rest of them were never properly co-ordinated. Some of them were not subordinate to any central authority, some had to report direct to the Privy Council, to the Provincial Government, to the Board of Finance, or to the War Board, or to more than one of these higher authorities. There was no suggestion of co-operation between these several authorities; every one had its own, or even more than one, body to which he was responsible. Even in times of peace and quiet, the gravest inconvenience had arisen from the fact that the subordinate authorities, the local guardian in his office, the burgomaster in his little township, were, owing to the congestion or overlapping of proper channels, quite independent and were autocratic rulers of their particular domain. But amid the pressure of business at that date this gave rise to nothing but confusion and incalculable loss.

Here and there, no doubt, a clever local administrator or burgomaster was an exception to the general rule; of the larger units only the two Lausitz and the monastery of Zeitz distinguished themselves. In the former the aristocratic-republican form of the constitution allowed the administrative authority to be centralized and the appointed delegates to settle points in dispute where necessary. In the case of the monastery of Zeitz, Chancellor Brandt made short work of the professional susceptibilities and dilatoriness of lawyers and made himself what in fact he ought to have been in times of emergency, the head of the province. The French Commissioners were consequently not bandied about from pillar to post, they knew to whom they had to apply, and as a man of weight and worth he occupied quite a different position in their eyes from officials whom they could only address by means of an interpreter and on whom they did not consider it necessary to waste time.

The fact that far fewer complaints about high-handedness and outrages on the part of the French came in at rarer intervals from the monastery of Zeitz and the two

Lausitz than from any of the other provinces was very striking.

I called the King's attention to it and took the opportunity of submitting to him, as I had frequently suggested to Marcolini on previous occasions, the necessity of appointing a delegate of the requisite standing for negotiations to every district, and at the same time to keep the provincial authorities up to their engagements by supplying requisitions that could not be avoided. I had often discussed the proposition previously with the President of the Army Board, old General Felgenhauer, with one or two members of the Army Council and with the Privy Councillor for finance, Manteuffel, even with Hopffgarten, the minister; all were in favour of the proposal. Graf Bose was urging, Marcolini supporting it, and they had failed to get on with it because the two Boards were, to some extent, jealous of the military members they might have to attach for the purposes of making arrangements for the passage of troops and the organisation, hitherto entirely neglected, of the lines of communication, and partly, too, out of jealousy of one another on account of the interference one department might exercise in the activities of the other. They appreciated the urgency of the measure but could not agree about the methods for making it effective, least of all about the instructions to be given to the delegates.

The King's attention had, however, been drawn to the matter and on several occasions he began to discuss it, when he always laid stress upon the arguments against it, an indication that he approved the proposition but distrusted his judgment because the point had not been raised through official channels. I therefore refused to be perturbed by his objections, because they were only raised to be rebutted and the proposals were adopted. But every here and there men had come forward in the provinces who were acceptable to the French in the capacity of intermediaries; they were confirmed in their functions. In other districts they were appointed by Government and

in every case invested with the necessary authority. At length they even decided, though more reluctantly, to appoint officers to control the traffic on the lines of communication.

But they were not always happy in the choice of their representatives. Among them, more especially among those whose claims the French had urged, were a good many who had contrived to acquire considerable fortunes by way of contracts, billeting and transport, as, by way of example, the Burgomaster of Zwickau, but, generally speaking, these measures brought the provinces a good deal of relief.

Everything the nominees of the French did was approved and they were regarded with gratitude to boot. But one party in the Finance Council of the Provincial Government and the Privy Council, in which Privy Councillor Oppel surreptitiously pulled the strings, never forgave Chancellor Brandt for having stepped into the breach in a crisis, and they had even succeeded in prejudicing the minister, Hopffgarten, against him. People submitted to outside pressure cheerfully enough in Saxony; on the other hand to do useful work without being compelled to is a criminal offence in the eyes of outraged self-seeking indolence.

The storm that had passed over had only shaken, not uprooted, old traditions and prejudices and everyone was in haste to return to them.

Our ambassador at Napoleon's Court, Herr von Senfft, had never left Paris at all because we had neither recalled him nor given him any instructions to meet the changed relationships. Accustomed from the date of the Rhine campaigns to be involved only as a constituent of the Empire, we had quite overlooked the fact that as the ally of Prussia we had ourselves entered the list of belligerents. But because Napoleon was anxious not to hurt our susceptibilities, and because he wanted us to appear to have been constrained by Prussia, he made a point of treating us as enemies only against our better judgment and to

pose as our deliverer. We therefore could not have done better than to play up to the part for which he cast us. But we were foolish enough to be conceited about our foreign policy and to invest it with a logic of which there had never been a trace.

We were very far from having opposed Napoleon "under pressure" only, we had been altogether honest in our hostility towards him. Whether Prussia intended to carry on war to the knife, whether it might not, after a stroke of good fortune, have come to terms with France and have allowed itself to be compensated by territorial aggrandizement, is a question on which I do not propose to enter now, but all circumstances point clearly to the fact that Frederick William III only decided on war for fear of popular discontent, or rather of the revolutionary faction in Prussia, at the head of which Prince Louis Ferdinand stood—or thought he did—but always cherished the secret hope that Napoleon would shirk a struggle with the erstwhile military prestige of Prussia and, as soon as he saw things looking serious, negotiate for the repurchase of Prussian friendship either by the restoration of the Franconian provinces, ceded in exchange for Hanover, or perhaps of the territories of Westphalia, sold at the peace of Lunéville, or by the free-will offering of a part of Saxony. By this means Frederick William would have silenced the malcontents in his own country by the prestige of fresh and cheap aggrandizement. He had counted for certain on aggrandizement at the expense of Saxony and he would perhaps have allowed us to indemnify ourselves in Franconia.

The heads of the Prussian General Staff, who exercised no unimportant influence on the Cabinet, did not put themselves to the trouble of disguising their views. Colonel Massenbach had previously submitted to the King a memorandum in which he argued the indefeasible right of Prussia, in view of the "necessity for its aggrandizement," to the two Lausitz provinces. This is evidence that the political morality of the Prussian Cabinet was

sequent invention of Humboldt and the philosopher-statesmen of 1813, but that, even prior to the battle of Jena, served as the basis of a cosmopolitan policy on which, seven years later, they had only to imprint the hallmark of the German national sentiment.

Graf Lusi, a confidant of Prince Hohenlohe, discussed it with me confidentially in Altenburg as long ago as the spring of 1805. If these men were not members of the inner councils of the initiated, Graf Götzen, an aide-de-camp of the King, was undeniably well informed. He was sent to Dresden in 1805 and 1806 to persuade the Saxon authorities to accept the measures for the unity of command and to sign the convention customary on these occasions. As aide-de-camp to the General Officer Commanding, I was brought into frequent touch with him and came to know him for a very able and distinguished man who, eschewing the blatancy of the majority of Prussian negotiators, very ably contrived to adapt himself to the atmosphere of the Court to which he was accredited and to form a sound judgment of the lie of the land on which he had to conduct his operations. A man of this type was sure to be careful to conceal any schemes for aggrandizement, more especially in a country at the expense of which they were to materialize.

One day when I was calling on him with Major Röder, one of Prince Hohenlohe's aides-de-camp, we wanted a map to settle some routes. Graf Götzen brought in a whole stack of maps from the adjoining room from which he picked out those he wanted. Röder picked up a sheet and remarked that something had been marked in on it in pencil.

Without looking up Götzen said: "Oh, that's a map on which I have sketched the Prussian frontier. It's Hanover, isn't it?"

"Hanover?" answered Röder. "No, it's . . ."

At that moment the other took the map out of his hand and pushed it under the others, and engaged our attention on one he had opened out on the table. Immediately

afterwards he took the whole pile into the inner room. I had, however, had time to catch a glimpse of the map Röder had in his hand and to see distinctly that the two Lausitz and a part of the province of Wittenberg were incorporated into Prussian territory by a line drawn from Halbau on the frontier of Bohemia in the direction of the Harz.

We had no notion of schemes of this sort in Saxony, and the Minister for War, Low, to whom I reported my discovery, did not consider that it called for any attention. We were entirely honest and entertained the serious and, as we believed, infallible purpose of driving Napoleon out of Germany.

At first, it is true, the Elector only intended his forces to act on the defensive in the Upper Saxon districts and to join hands with the Prussians without crossing the frontier, and this, too, was embodied in the convention agreed and in the orders given to General Zezschwitz. But as late as October 12 he received the Elector's express orders to co-operate with the Prussians even beyond the Upper Saxony frontier and to notify Prince Hohenlohe of his instructions. The battle of Jena and the disturbance of the day preceding it prevented both the one and the other, and the original draft, which we were subsequently glad to hush up, is still among my papers.

The issue had quickly cured us of our delusion of seeing Napoleon expelled from Germany at the hands of Prussia. But by looking up to the man who had shaken and overturned all existing institutions as a chosen instrument of Providence, we fawned on him to a degree he had neither expected nor desired and which, on occasions, became positively embarrassing . . .

The long term of tutelage under which Gutschmid and Marcolini had kept the King rendered him incapable of standing on his own feet, of regarding himself as independent, not only in the administration of his country but in his foreign policy as well. It was not enough for him



to attach himself to a stronger power, he had to crouch to it as well.

As long as a German Empire was in being, its constitution furnished him with a rule of thumb that served to direct and mould his policy. This was indispensable to enable him always to be sure what he ought to decide and do, what his line of conduct ought to be. Just as in the case of a man who, subject to fits of giddiness, has to cross a narrow plank, the support of the weakest and most rickety of handholds is enough to enable him to preserve his balance, the existence of the Empire, little support as it afforded him, was quite enough to enable him to keep his footing, but he had to have something or other to which to cling. He had therefore, when he could no longer shut his eyes to the possibility of the dissolution of the Empire, been on the point of submitting his neck entirely to the iron yoke of Prussia.

In the room of the latter Power there suddenly appeared the Emperor of the French, whom he had previously abhorred, in the guise of the executor of the decrees of Providence. No wonder that Frederick Augustus subjected himself wholly to him the more whole-heartedly as gratitude bound him to the man who might have crushed him, was, in fact, justified in doing so, and instead of that made overtures for his friendship. In the internal administration of his country, too, he had found similar support in time-honoured formulæ, which every now and then were beginning to show signs of wear and tear. He was no doubt conscious of this, but refused to admit it to himself; he still clung too closely to his old views to take the steps best adapted to restore his lost equilibrium, to have round him men whose capacity was not solely restricted to a laboriously acquired familiarity with barren routine. He had for so long been wont to look for nothing from men of flesh and blood and all things from officialdom that even now he only looked to ministers, to the president, to the general and so on for advice and support without inquiring whether these appointments were, in fact, entrusted to men

of intelligence and capacity. His honest purpose to heal his country's sores, to reform the abuses of whose existence he was aware without the ability to discern their cause, was paralysed by the incapacity of assistants of this type, and the personal sacrifices he did not hesitate to make were stultified by it.

We were, once and for all, so accustomed to be ruled that when the old leading-strings of our conduct failed us, we only looked about for a new yoke to which to submit ourselves. The dread of giving Napoleon cause for umbrage was the pretext under which we practised duplicity on ourselves. It became the custom to submit every trifle, not only of foreign but of our domestic affairs, to the Emperor. We often made ourselves look ridiculous in doing so, because Napoleon was by no means anxious to become embroiled in the internal affairs of the States constituting the League of the Rhine. To what lengths this anxious timidity was carried may be illustrated by the following instance.

When I was in Warsaw in the February of 1807 the Prince of Benevent sent for me to ask me about a dispatch he had just received by special courier from Dresden. I was in a quandary because I was entirely unaware of the arrival of this courier. He had been dispatched in such frantic haste that they had forgotten to instruct him to report to me or to give me any intimation of it, although both the Prince and the Emperor himself looked on me as their accredited diplomatic agent. Marcolini frequently permitted himself offences against decorum of this sort. He was unconscious of their impropriety, because, accustomed as he was to servile adulation in Dresden, he did not consider it necessary to preserve the semblance of courtesy towards any one. In failing to do so he meant no harm, but he ought to have realised the disservice he was doing the King by depriving his representatives of all credit and prestige in the posts to which they had been appointed by ignoring them so contemptuously and afterwards expecting them to carry out instructions transmitted to them direct.

I endeavoured to conceal my astonishment and to avoid letting it become apparent that I had not been informed of the dispatch of the courier or of the purport of his papers. But Talleyrand was far too acute not to notice it. He had sent for me because he did not understand the purport of the dispatch; it was nothing more important than an inquiry whether they were free to retain temporarily the old Electoral coat of arms and the legend "Elect. Saxon" on bonds that had been in circulation for some forty years, or whether it would be necessary to withdraw them and to issue new ones at once. The inconveniences that would arise from the latter alternative were set forth at length and discussed down to the most tiresome detail. If it should, however, be deemed necessary, they would willingly submit to the inconvenience, but, in the event of a postponement being accorded, the matter would be taken in hand without fail as soon as more urgent business had once been settled.

As frequent references were made to the contributions, Talleyrand thought it might be a petition for remission or the question of the issue of a new State loan. I was able to reassure him on both these points and attributed the whole inquiry to our scrupulous conscientiousness.

He smiled, agreed that it was almost unparalleled, but thought that the matter had hardly been worth a special messenger, and that if, inconceivable as it might sound, they really had had conscientious scruples, "they could have communicated them to you by post, and you could have discussed them with me by word of mouth, and I think that by way of answer I need only have sent you a Dutch ducat." (These coins still retained their old imprint.) "As a matter of fact," he added, "I don't know that I have much to say, but since they repose such implicit confidence in me, I will draft an answer I shall send to you and you will have the goodness to transmit it by the same courier."

I quoted the concluding words in my dispatch, which dealt with a far more important matter. They had asked

us for an official memorandum of our relationships with the Princes of Schwarzenburg in order to come to a decision about their sovereign status, because they were, in respect of a portion of their territory, the vassals of Saxony. I had, at Talleyrand's suggestion, pressed repeatedly and urgently for this note, but never had an answer. They were waiting for the Prince of Benevent to write about the matter himself, as if it were his and not our concern, simply because he had, in order not to ignore our claims, abstained from coming to a decision for so long. Because we paid absolutely no attention to his reminders he had at length to come to terms with the Schwarzenburg agent, Herr von Kettelhodt, and our well-founded rights were passed over.

That we did not assert them was entirely due to our slavish adherence to old routine methods. The King and Marcolini and Bose quite appreciated that it was their business to take action in the matter, but they were in a great state of flurry about whom they should appoint to deal with the question. My whole existence at Warsaw was in their view such an innovation that, although they were entirely satisfied with the way in which I was conducting business, they never really knew whether they ought to give me instructions.

The whole muddle arose from the fact that Herr von Senfft, our ambassador, continued to stay on in Paris. The whole of the diplomatic corps had followed in the Emperor's train, more especially the envoys of the princes of the Rhine League. Senfft was debarred from joining them because we were at the time at war with Napoleon. Graf von Bose had, as envoy extraordinary, signed the Peace of Posen, but immediately afterwards had taken over the portfolio of Minister of Foreign Affairs. This should have been the moment of recalling our ambassador from Paris and attaching him to the Emperor's Headquarters, and in Posen they could have got Talleyrand to assent to it. I do not know whether they had thought of this and whether Graf Bose put out any feelers to carry it out, but I have reason to believe he did.

Bose, who in matters of real importance always contrived to strike the right note, had probably allowed himself to be swayed in this affair of minor importance by his fondness for preciousness of phrasing and diplomatic finesse, and the Prince of Benevent had not understood him. He simply answered, "I don't know Herr von Senfft." They took this to be a hint that our ambassador was *persona non grata* in Paris and that Talleyrand did not care to have anything to do with him.

The obvious thing would have been to recall Herr von Senfft and to have given him another appointment or at any rate to have accredited another ambassador to Headquarters for the term of its absence from Paris. It was resolved too to take one or the other course, but our habit of dilly-dallying could not arrive at the sticking-point of action. The appointment of a military representative to the Emperor's Headquarters would have removed all difficulties and would not have impaired the ambassador's prestige; but a whole number of reasons were against it. They could not come to any agreement on the question of the status of such a representative, for there was no precedent in the annals of Saxon diplomacy that might have served as a standard. The fact that other Powers had always had delegates of this kind at Allied Headquarters failed to affect us. There was no precedent for it in Saxony itself, consequently the thing was an innovation which called for long and anxious deliberation. True, in previous wars Saxon officers had always been appointed to the Austrian or Prussian Headquarters, but only by the General Officer commanding the Saxon forces, and were only concerned with the requirements of the troops. It was a case of a good deal wider commission in this instance. Neither Bose nor Marcolini was disposed to entrust an appointment of this nature to a soldier. During the King's reign the only military men who had held diplomatic appointments were the Generals Sacken, Stutterheim and Zinzendorf. After Zinzendorf had become Minister for War, every soldier had been cold-shouldered out of the diplomatic service, and

the atrophied pedantry of the army chiefs had reduced us to such a state that there was not a single colonel or general qualified for the appointment. Graf Bose, it is true, was not in opposition to the army, but he judged it by what he saw of it in Dresden, and after he had become Minister of Foreign Affairs, a spirit of caste exclusiveness, reluctant to allow an outsider to cross the threshold of the diplomatic preserve, had to a certain extent taken possession of him. Since, however, every secretary of legation was not fitted to become an ambassador and too little importance was attached to these appointments in Saxony, which were for the most part held by young men drawn from the lower and less well-endowed sections of the educated classes, it had become the custom to choose ambassadors from the ranks of the chamberlains. Anything that had once become custom soon acquired the sanctity of law in Saxony and they now felt powerless to vary it.

Everyone, therefore, who wished to adopt a career in the diplomatic service qualified as a chamberlain first of all, as even Sacken and Zinzenheim had done; the only exception was Graf Röder, but he had the qualification of a privy councillor.

## II

### AT NAPOLEON'S HEADQUARTERS

AS it was deemed expedient to send a mission to the Emperor at Warsaw on the ratification of peace, there was nothing for it but to choose two chamberlains for the errand. They felt it was the only possible way to do him honour. The chamberlains Gablenz and Gersdorf were appointed for the purpose; they were the bearers of a letter from the King to Napoleon in which only they were mentioned by name, and they were at the same time to convey the gifts, customary after the conclusion of every Peace Treaty, to the several ministers. I was to accompany them, but they made a mystery of the nature of their mission, in fact they were forbidden to disclose it. I was only appointed to act as their escort.

The King had promoted me to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and since October 4 I had been an aide-de-camp. The most important business had passed through my hands, I had been consulted on every occasion, had initiated everything that had been done, and had put through a good many things hitherto unprecedented in Saxony.

The King and Marcolini, and Bose as well, acknowledged this handsomely and not one of them took any action without me. But as we were at peace again now, the old arrogance with all its prejudices came into its own again. They had been glad enough to employ a major on business of the most urgent importance, but a lieutenant-colonel was not good enough for a purely honorary mission. Graf Bose remembered that, as chamberlain, he had been ambassador and High Chamberlain, and gave his instructions to the two delegates with impressive solemnity behind

locked doors, which were only thrown open to me when the latter had been entrusted with their confidential mission. There was plenty of condescending courtesy, but at the same time a lot of aloofness, in his manner towards me, and I received my instructions to accompany the chamberlains and to turn my acquaintance with Napoleon's Household to account by obtaining an audience for them. At the same time I was to transmit the nominal roll of the 6000 troops we were contributing to the Emperor's army, together with a letter from the Minister to the Prince of Neufchâtel, and to regard myself as accredited to the latter.

It was one of the last weaknesses of its kind into which Bose relapsed and our relationships were, later on, entirely restored. He no doubt remembered that I had often seen him as a man of flesh and blood and meant to give a demonstration of full ministerial dignity, and at the same time to drop me a hint that only the pressure of urgent need had necessitated promoting me temporarily above my proper walk in life. His manner and the mystery he made of a matter which was nothing of the kind, for the two had no other mission than to convey the letter and the presents, irritated me. If I had not had the instructions to negotiate with the Prince of Neufchâtel about our contingent, I should have endeavoured to evade the mission altogether.

I took my leave of Graf Bose on terms of some coolness to call on Marcolini, who had sent for me. The mass of instructions he gave me included one to ascertain whether Talleyrand were really displeased with our ambassador, Senfft, and what he had meant by his "I don't know Herr von Senfft." The main point Marcolini wanted to enjoin on me was to look after and safeguard the strong-box with the gifts for Talleyrand, containing jewels and securities to the value of many thousand talers, especially entrusted to Chamberlain von Gablenz.

"You know what the box contains?" Marcolini asked in the course of conversation.

I said no.



"Did Graf Bose not tell you?"

"No."

"How silly . . . he's a bit of a stickler at times, is friend Bose," he remarked in his drawling voice, and at once gave me full information.

The two chamberlains had no diplomatic status, they were only the bearers of a letter which expressed the King's satisfaction at the conclusion of peace and his regard for Napoleon. All this fuss was quite unnecessary, because there was no personal communication connected with the transmission of the letter, and therefore the status of its bearers was a matter of indifference; but if the intention was to emphasise the "*acte de politesse*," a chamberlain's rank missed the mark.

I have enlarged on this mission at such length because it throws some sidelights on the views prevailing at the Saxon Court. Embarrassment, because we realised that something ought to be done yet did not know how to set about it, because the man in office, our ambassador, Herr von Senfft, was not available. Still more embarrassment because we thought he was not on good terms with the Emperor or his minister, and we lacked the courage either to recall him or to investigate the matter, or to offend him by appointing another ambassador *ad interim* at the Emperor's Headquarters—and the usual remedy, a half-measure, based on our blind belief that the rank of chamberlain of the bearers of the letter and gifts would compensate for the absence of an ambassador.

I was attached to the mission at the King's desire because my knowledge of the Imperial Headquarters might be valuable. And it might have been if they had given me a commission of any kind or had accredited me to someone, for my business with the Prince of Neuchâtel was settled quite quickly and there was not a word in the letter I handed him suggesting that I should remain attached to his staff. As soon as I had given him the information he wanted about our Corps of 6000, there was nothing left for me to discuss with him.

In agreement with the King, Marcolini was very insistent for me to go to Warsaw, partly to guard the valuables we were conveying, principally, however, to act, to all intents and purposes, as his agent—an agent entirely dependent on himself. It was for this reason that he had relieved me of any official connection with the Ministry and had instilled into me that it was essential always to report to him first. He and Bose were at the time in accord and on very good terms, but, in spite of that, he forced me, a subordinate not of the diplomatic service, on them, and thereby provoked the chilly attitude of the minister towards me and, by the same stroke, had rendered all the information I could send and all the services I could render valueless by making them, from the King's point of view, not official intelligence but purely private communications, so that he never knew whether he ought to attach any importance to it. Marcolini was particularly fond of imbroglios of this nature. The influence of the new minister was not a matter to which he could afford to be indifferent, and he did not mean to see it strengthened by an agent at Imperial Headquarters who was dependent on him. Bose would have been in a position to fall back on the latter in order to put through what he pleased, because the latter's reports would have been official. Mine would only carry the weight that Marcolini saw fit to give them, and in the meantime his relationships to the latter would become more clearly defined, for, as he put it himself, "*ne pourrai moi-même plus le voir aussi familièrement que jusqu'à présent.*"

I myself was entirely at his mercy, since I had no connection with the diplomatic service and was being employed on business entirely outside of my military capacity. He was, therefore, in the position to support or to drop me, just as it suited his purpose.

We set out on our journey on the day after Christmas, but our progress was rather slow on account of Gersdorf's ill-health. The weather and the roads were abominable to the last degree, my fellow-travellers smashed their coach, and I went on ahead to Posen, where we had a two days'

rest. I met General Savary, who was travelling through and gave me a very cordial reception, and I dined with him at the Commandant's, General Liebert, and learned that Duroc, the Master of the Ceremonies, had been unlucky enough to break his collar-bone when his coach was upset on the road, and had therefore stayed behind somewhere near Balbiak. I could not induce either of my fellow-travellers to call on the Commandant; the one was too lazy, the other too haughty.

As they had dispatches and a present for Duroc I waited on him in Balbiak, where he was lodging in a bishop's adjacent country house, had a pleasant reception, and brought in Gersdorf, who presented the gift.

We had a lot of bother about lodgings in Warsaw, where I arrived a day before the others. The Prince of Benevent received me with great kindness and gave me a standing invitation to dine at his table, although I was, if it came to that, nothing more than the travelling courier of the two chamberlains. I presented the latter to him, but as their mission was, strictly speaking, not diplomatic, since they were nothing more than bearers of a letter, it was not possible for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to present them to the Emperor, but they had to be announced by an aide-de-camp.

I learnt this in the first few days, but they would not believe me and held it beneath their dignity to address themselves to an aide-de-camp. Talleyrand saw the plight they were in, but he, too, knew how to keep strictly to the niceties of etiquette. He attended most politely to any business they had to transact with him personally, offered them the hospitality of his table, at which they appeared occasionally, but evaded any references to an audience with the Emperor. They did not take the trouble to find other means of approach. Gersdorf was an invalid and lazy, and Gablenz, who had been born in Poland and spoke Polish fluently, had found some acquaintances among the Poles and associated and played cards with them without worrying very much about the fulfilment of

his mission. He looked on everyone attached to Headquarters, with the exception of the Prince of Benevent, as beneath his notice. He entertained a distinct aversion from everything connected with the army, which, oddly enough, emanated from an ingrained prepossession for the military profession. Because he had never been able to follow his predilection and yet felt that he had decided gifts for military command, he conceived a very sore aversion from the profession as a whole, and yet as a man of undoubted ability was conscious of the emptiness and insignificance of his career from page to groom of the chamber and chamberlain. He was, therefore, prone to feel that people were looking down on him, and, in a spirit of contrariness, attached all the more importance to his Court appointment and to his ancestral tree, which, owing to his own marriage to the daughter of a newly-ennobled baptized Jew, Bolza (he had acquired considerable wealth and the patent of a count as a contractor in the Seven Years' War), he failed to pass on unblemished to his descendants. He therefore considered himself far above the military parvenus of the French Court and took great umbrage when I referred to his presentation by one of the Emperor's aides-de-camp.

In the meanwhile, we wasted time waiting for a summons to be presented by the Prince of Benevent. General Damórowski, who at one time had been in Saxon service and frequently called on us, failed to overcome our prejudice, but when Graf Beust, who, as the Prince Primate's ambassador, was attached to Headquarters, and whom the Prince of Benevent employed on all sorts of negotiations, stated without beating about the bush that the chamberlains would never be admitted to the Emperor unless they applied to an aide-de-camp, they did not dare go on shilly-shallying, because Napoleon might at any moment be leaving Warsaw in a hurry, so they at length decided to abate their pride a little. So I went to General Bertrand, who happened to be on duty, and reported the arrival of the delegates of the Emperor.

On the very next day Talleyrand told Gablenz: "The Emperor will receive you with Herr von Gersdorf and Herr von Funck."

He added, addressing me in particular, "You will accompany these gentlemen to their audience." When I modestly reminded him that I had no credentials and was not mentioned in the letter, he smiled magisterially and said, "That does not matter. The Emperor mentioned your name with those of the others."

Gersdorf was quite pleased about it, but Gablenz did not succeed in concealing his mortification, and I was a little embarrassed what excuse to make at Dresden for the unsought honour shown to me.

It was a lesson the Emperor meant to read us; he, like the Prince of Benevent, was well informed about the principles and prejudices of the Saxon Court, and more especially of the slight esteem in which soldiers were held there. The minister himself, the Emperor's Grand Chamberlain, meant thereby to underline the fact that a chamberlain's status by no means atoned for the blunder of having omitted to appoint an ambassador for this errand. He treated the delegates purely as the bearers of an autograph letter, and in this capacity they had no claim to precedence over me who had accompanied them. As a lieutenant-colonel and personal A.D.C. to the King I might very properly have accompanied a special envoy in a subordinate capacity. But to attach a lieutenant-colonel as a travelling courier to two chamberlains with no higher qualifications than that was an impropriety, bordering, in the case of a military court and at Headquarters, on the offensive, and for which the Emperor intended to give us a quiet snub in this way.

The delivery of the letter ensued in the usual way. General Bertrand announced our attendance to the Emperor, and soon afterwards an usher threw open the door without any formal presentation.

Napoleon was alone and at once addressed his wonted "Qui êtes vous?" to each of us.

It was Gablenz's turn first, and because there was something soldierly in his bearing the Emperor asked, "Vous avez servi?" He said "no," and Napoleon inquired after the King's health and pursuits and said a few words about hunting.

Gersdorf became a little confused and said with a stutter that he was a "chambellan" and "conseiller des appels." Napoleon did not understand, and the explanation only tended to make things less intelligible until at length he grasped it. "Ah," he said, "vous êtes homme de loi," and began to talk about law and the code he was having drawn up in France, and wanted to know what view Saxon law took in the matter of mortgages and widows' portions. Gersdorf in the meantime had recovered his self-possession, and his answers seemed to please the Emperor.

Then he turned to me with the words, "C'est le major Funck. Je vous connais, je vous ai envoyé à Dresde de Jena. Je vous ai vu après, où était-ce?"

"A Halle, Sire."

"C'est vrai."

He then asked me whether I had settled everything about the contingent with the Prince of Neufchâtel, said something about our troops, spoke very highly of our cavalry, and dismissed us after some remarks of a general nature.

We were then invited to the luncheon which, in Duroc's absence, Caulaincourt, as Master of the Horse, gave every Monday to the diplomatic corps and distinguished strangers, as well as to the Emperor's assembly and concert. The company for the latter assembled in the drawing-room of the palace in which Bacciarelli's handsome pictures of episodes in the history of Poland are hung. A number of card-tables were set out at which the company took their seats. One, round which the Prince of Benevent as Grand Chamberlain and other officers of the Court stood in a group, remained unoccupied. The Emperor came in through the door leading into the throne room, entered into general conversation for a few minutes, and took his

seat at the card-table with the ladies he had invited to make up his table. He played whist, but not more than one rubber, then he rose and passed through the door opposite to the throne room, into the big marble drawing-room, exchanging a few words of conversation with one or two of the company, and for this reason no doubt passed half round the room.

Two rows of chairs were set in a semicircle for the ladies in the marble drawing-room with an armchair for the Emperor in the middle facing the orchestra. The music was never noisy, for the Emperor only cared for low music, quartettes, or vocal music, with only as much accompaniment as was indispensable. Parr and his wife were never allowed to fail these concerts, nor was Brizzi.

As soon as the music had begun Napoleon gradually sank into himself, the hard lines of his face slowly relaxed, and an expression of suffering softened his face. He would sit like this in absolute silence and lost in the music for half or at most three-quarters of an hour, and then, as if suddenly waking up, would rise without any warning and the whole company, preceded by the ladies, would follow him into the dining-room. In the centre of the room stood a long table for the ladies with the Emperor's armchair at one end, smaller tables and buffets for the men on either side of it. Though the Emperor seemed to be enjoying the ladies' society, he would abruptly disappear through a side door, and everyone who cared to take supper was free to take his seat, when the Chamberlain or prefect of the palace, with every polite attention, saw that no one was overlooked and everyone hospitably served. The fare was of the best.

A few days later the chamberlains received the Emperor's letter in reply, and all three of us the snuff-box with the "N" apiece which Caulaincourt presented to us.

We made ready for our departure. My coach was packed, when on the last day a mounted messenger came in from Dresden and, in a letter from Marcolini, brought me, personally, the royal orders to stay on in Warsaw.

My sojourn in this place became henceforward quite unprecedented. I was retained at Imperial Headquarters without credentials of any kind, without a mission or pretext, and without being able to answer the question what my business there was. I was, as I have already said, nothing more than Marcolini's agent and was running the risk of being dismissed unless I got in touch with some quarter or other. On the following day I went to see the Prince of Benevent and told him frankly about the order I had received, that I could only stay on in Warsaw under his protection until a Saxon ambassador arrived, and asked him to allow me to count on his protection. He took this in a very cordial spirit, assured me he was very glad to see me and gave me a standing invitation to join his dinner-table.

His daily guests, in addition to his office staff, were Graf Beust, the ambassador of the Prince Primate, Baron Gagern, the ambassador of Nassau, now minister to the King of the Netherlands, and Baron (later Duke of) Dalberg—these three were Talleyrand's intimates—often, too, at dinner were the Prince of Waldeck-Pyrmont and the Duke Ferdinand of Württemberg. I used to meet Graf Winzingerode, the ambassador of the latter Court, Herr von Grafenreuth of Bavaria more rarely, but otherwise all the distinguished strangers in Warsaw in turn, and among whom the Persian and the Turkish ambassadors made something of a stir.

I had won the patronage of Gagern and Dalberg more especially. I learnt a good deal from them and from Graf Beust, and a good deal from Graf Winzingerode, who was a well-wisher of mine, and although he was not in Napoleon's good graces, always contrived to be well informed because he spent money freely and by his master's uncunctiousness won even the Emperor's respect. The habit of meeting every day led at length to a certain degree of intimacy. Talleyrand himself used to discuss a good many things with me, and Gagern, at his prompting, a good many more, and it got so far at last that I was received



in the inner ring, to the *parties de plaisir* when the minister dined at Baron Dalberg's, or at the Prince of Waldeck-Pyrmont's *en petit comité*, or at evening parties at Madame Tiszkevitz', Prince Poniatowski's, where he at times indulged in some rather remarkable utterances over the billiard-table. After dinner, that is to say, about nine o'clock in the evening, I rarely missed going on to La Besnadière, where the same company usually assembled. I had won the liking of this, at that time very influential, man, and in cases of doubt could count on getting the truth from him—or no answer at all; a material advantage, for even in the latter case the hint to walk delicately was worth a great deal to me.

The Prince of Benevent, who wished me well, did everything to give my position in Warsaw some standing and prestige. I was invited constantly to the dinners to the diplomatic corps, given by the Master of the Horse, and, after his return, by the Master of the Ceremonies, as well as to the Emperor's concerts. At the ceremonies on the occasion of the inauguration of the Polish Constitution a seat among the ambassadors was allotted to me and I was invited to the banquet. Talleyrand told me in the most cordial way he would be glad if they would accredit me, and was expecting them to do so any day, and the Emperor had expressed the same view. Napoleon did not like new faces about him; the Prince of Neuchâtel had become accustomed to me; they all preferred transacting business with people they knew "*et nous serons tous bien aises de vous conserver.*"

I was only able to refer to the distinctions with which I was honoured as matters of fact, in my letters, not to these expressions, the repetition of which would have sounded rather too lacking in modesty in my dispatches. If I had been aspiring to the appointment of ambassador, I need only have omitted to make any inquiries into Herr von Senfft's relationships in Paris and at the same time have induced Graf Beust, who had become Marcolini's fount of inspiration at Napoleon's Court, to hint that Talleyrand

wanted to have me as ambassador. The prospect of receiving a snuff-box set with diamonds by my intervention would have been enough to induce Graf Beust to do anything, but manœuvrings of this kind, by means of which alone anything could and can be effected in Saxony, always struck me as undignified.

On the contrary, I reassured Marcolini on the score of our ambassador, Senfft. The whole misunderstanding arose from the fact that he was known in Paris as le Baron de Pilsac, because his full signature is Senfft von Pilsack, and that Talleyrand, on Graf Bose's inquiry, failed to remember that Monsieur de Senfft and le Baron de Pilsac were one and the same person. I imagined that by imparting this important bit of information I had rendered a public service, and could not guess that it would remain pigeon-holed, not on account of any distrust in my source of information, but simply because I was not officially competent to transmit it. The Prince of Benevent took this particular opportunity to transmit some confidential information through me, to drop many a significant hint which he could not, in his official capacity, have conveyed to us plainly through an ambassador. Thus, for example, in the matter of the remission of a third of the Contribution which was accorded to a man as deep in Napoleon's black books as the Duke of Weimar; furthermore, the warning not to accede to any extraordinary requisition from any French official, any quartermaster, any general, even from any marshal, unless they produced a special authority from the Emperor, the Prince of Neufchâtel or from him, Talleyrand.

("I assure you," he said, "that they will not pass these requisitions if you refuse them. If, however, you are easy-going enough to meet them, you certainly will not get anything back and you will only annoy the Emperor by your complaints.")

In addition the assurance that the Emperor would give us Erfurt or Nordhausen, if we would furnish him with any pretext—and this was not far to seek in the loss we

had suffered in the exchange of Barby and the Mansfeld domains for Kottbus; the urgent request to define our attitude in our relationships to the Prince of Schwarzburg and the Reuss territories, because the existence of these principalities depended on us and they preferred to be associated with us because the one was afraid of falling under the suzerainty of the embryo State of Westphalia and the other under that of Bavaria; the reminder to put forward our protest in the matter of our share in Tressfurt and Doria, which would otherwise be mopped up by Hessen, and the like.

As regards the last point, I was only to submit a provisional note for Talleyrand to have something to go on.

As I was not competent to submit a note of this nature, with the assistance of Councillor Ferber, of the Treasury, who had been sent to Warsaw on the payment of the Contribution, I drafted a memorandum setting forth the loss Saxony would suffer by these territories, how much of them it had owned or what profits it had drawn from its relationships with them. We based it on the Hassel tables, because the French made use of them in territorial redistribution. After one or two emendations not difficult to effect, La Besnadière accepted the accuracy of the statement; "but," he said, "we must have an official document; tell them to give you authority to submit a note, then there will be no difficulty about it."

But often as I wrote, this matter was passed over in silence in the answers. I have already explained why we did not accept the remission of the Contributions; the other points they wanted Ambassador Senfft to deal with—in Paris.

It is inconceivable what induced our Cabinet to entertain this idea, as both the Emperor and his minister were away from Paris and, further, our ambassador, whose mission had come to an end with the war, had to be accredited afresh. But Graf Bose would take no action on anything I might write, because I was appointed, not by the Cabinet, but by the King, at the instance of Marco-

lini, and the King clung so closely to routine that he would neither give me authority, because his minister had not proposed it, nor investigate the matter at all, because it had not been brought to his knowledge through the proper channels, which he himself had plugged up. When, on my return, I discussed it all with him, he said he thought Talleyrand would communicate with him officially, *i.e.* by the roundabout route via Paris. And when I took the liberty of drawing his attention to the difference between confidential and official communications, he thought the methods of French diplomacy were extraordinary.

The Schwarzburg business became at length so urgent that Talleyrand lost patience and I was at last informed that Herr von Globig had been appointed ambassador at Headquarters and would have his instructions on all these matters. Senfft himself had written to them from Paris that he was unable to effect anything there. They therefore decided to send him to Headquarters. But as he would not travel without his wife and she wanted plenty of time for the journey, they decided on the provisional mission of the chamberlain and lawyer Globig. A budding diplomat, Councillor Blümner, was to accompany him.

Reminiscences of the French Court are, strictly speaking, foreign to the subject-matter of these pages, but one or two of the circumstances that paved the way for the breach of the friendship between the Emperor and Talleyrand may not be out of place here. Napoleon's powerful grip had welded the several factions of republican France into unity, had carried the nation off its feet by the glamour of his victories, and had contrived to stay internal discord by the clever device of skilfully merging conflicting interests until they balanced each other, and thereby rendered them all dependent on a single factor, his nod and his decision. He was at one and the same time the support of the aristocrats and of the Jacobins, of the old nobility and of the parvenus, who all feared him, but feared their old antagonists still more. The clergy owed their continued

existence to him; the trading community, security in business; the people, relief from the oppression of their pettier and bigger tyrants; the nation at large, the termination of the Revolution; while the army worshipped him as a leader who had never known defeat.

Had this system emanated ready-made from his brain, or had a wise pilot plotted out his course, or had it been the upshot of force of circumstances? One or the other may be assumed, or perhaps the one alternative as much as the other; but what is undeniable remains, that only a genius such as his could have conceived such a method, could have grasped it even if it had been brought within its reach, to have seized shifting circumstances as he did, to carry out the gigantic task as he did.

His immense work had been to consolidate and remodel the State, torn from its axis by the Revolution, from within by directing its energies to without; to restore a character to a nation reverted to savagery, degenerated to serfdom by hideous discord under a succession of tyrants, and to reclaim it by slow degrees to a reign of Law and Order by investing it with sovereignty over neighbouring nations. Only a man equipped with talents no less outstanding in the field than at the council table could have solved it.

Since his fall, people have professed to see nothing more in him than the usurper and tyrant; to judge him fairly, they should not omit to cast a glance at France as it was when, on his return from Egypt, he assumed command. Would the Bourbons have been restored to the throne if he had not dared to come forward as the chief of hostile parties? If at that time it were such an easy task to calm and to unite France, why did not Moreau and Pontecorvo at that juncture feel themselves called to effect the salvation of their native land? If the venture they afterwards depicted as so easy appeared to them at the time as impossible and they only discovered it to have been easy after it had succeeded, and they themselves were marvelling at its accomplishment? One cannot help remembering the egg

of Columbus. People reproach him with the miseries his wars spread over part of Europe, but had this scourge devastated fewer countries before Bonaparte nominated himself First Consul and Emperor? Would those wars have ceased had other demagogues temporarily ruled France, and were not the campaigns of the sansculottes far more devastating than his? Why, the crowned heads of Europe have themselves understood and admitted that it was only then, after a stable government had been established in France, that it was possible to enter into negotiations with it with any degree of confidence.

If Napoleon had been able to call a halt in 1807 he would have been the benefactor of Europe; whether he could have done so, only the future will be competent to decide. Until then, it will remain an open question whether he or Pitt deserves to be called the Scourge of Europe or whether both are not equally at fault.

At that time, in 1807, the nation's delirium at its leader's success was still in full flood. There were factions, no doubt, but they were only slinking about in the dark. There were intrigues of jealousy, of private quarrels at Court and among the leaders of his armies, that might go so far that one general would have welcomed the other's defeat, or failed to support him in a crisis; but they all had to cower before the Master's eye; and the Emperor, reviewing them astutely, contrived—for it was rare for him to punish—to convert private jealousies into rivalry in his service. Thus, Davout and Bernadotte, Massena and Savary, were at daggers drawn; hardly any Marshal had a good word to say for any other; but all of them served the Emperor and the honour of his name with equal zeal. Similar intrigues have been rife in every other army; they have always had the most disastrous consequences, wherever the leader's presence and strong hand failed to mould recalcitrant wills to unity in action.

Schmettau and Winterfeld and Frederick the Second's Generals hated one another no less fervently than Napoleon's Marshals did; isolated disasters were the consequence, but

whenever the King or the Emperor was at hand, all passions died down to unite in service of the man they feared and honoured.

Factions of this sort were powerless to shake Napoleon's dominance or to curb his will, but a coalition had quietly come about that had set itself this purpose. There were, on general lines, two groupings that at the time divided Napoleon's immediate entourage; one party was aspiring for fresh conquests; the other for security of the spoils they had won. These two incompatible factors will no doubt always be found at work below the surface in every nation and at every Court. In the case of the French, however, who had only just emerged from the shocks of a long-drawn Revolution and were accustomed to rapid upheavals of states, constitutions and private fortunes, and where continuous wars protracted the chances of these upheavals, these rival aspirations and ambitions were bound to be more potent in effect.

The Imperial lavishness with which military leaders were rewarded; the immense fortunes most of them had amassed in a short spell and in the vigour of their years, their wealth, their titles, the prestige they enjoyed, were an irresistible incitement to the younger generation in the senior ranks of the army. A General of twenty-five thought he had hardly begun to distinguish himself; he aspired to become a Marshal, a Duke, the incumbent of innumerable preferments. An army of hotheads of this type, some of them attached as aides-de-camp or to the Emperor's General Staff, some of them as divisional Commanders, swarmed round Headquarters, feared nothing except peace and craved only for fresh adventures. In every mission entrusted to them they disregarded both difficulty and danger and, staking their lives in the great gamble to win the big prizes, they recked nothing of life or of bloodshed; at last they despised every restraint of forethought and acknowledged no other quality than recklessness.

The Emperor, rejoicing in their courage, the brilliance

of their achievements, was well pleased with his youthful heroes who contrived to inspire their spirit into the troops under their command, and allowed them to kick over the traces. Every enterprise they undertook was bound to be successful because they had set out on it with their minds made up not to relinquish it, because they knew that recklessness, even when it suffered shipwreck on its own impossibility, would always be its own justification in the Emperor's eyes. Even in enterprises which to all appearances were impossible fortune was prone to favour the reckless because that was the one thing the enemy had not discounted, and because the audacity of the assault was allied to the most stubborn pertinacity; often repulsed ten times over, often more than half wiped out, the belief that they were bound to win animated the remnant for a last endeavour, and this last effort snatched victory, already won, from the grasp of their dazed opponents.

The belief that they were invincible made them invincible, just as the belief that they were sure to be beaten in the end paralyzed the enemy's spirits and efforts. No one inquired how dearly victory had been bought, whether it had proved worth the price it had cost; how many or how few of his forces the leader brought back from the field of battle; whether every vestige of fighting discipline was not bound to be destroyed in the case of men who were called upon to undergo the limit of endurance in danger and privations.

The populous States of France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and the rest could still furnish drafts to fill the gaps, and with such troops and with such leaders, Napoleon himself could not fail to lose all idea that anything was impossible. His partiality for this heroic youth laid him open, if not to their councils, to their ambitions, which only too often coincided with his own.

It is probably not to be denied that he hoodwinked himself about the mischief that was stealthily beginning to corrode his armies. Among the mass of generals of rapid promotion, there were only a few who had the gift of



leadership; many lacked even the most elementary military knowledge. In their case, audacity had to make everything good; many had built up their reputation on the dispiritedness of the enemy and the glamour of Napoleon's name. In the madness of daring they had learnt how to fling their intrepid forces against the foe, but they had no notion of judging a position, of even the first principles of the first onset in a division maintaining

it for longer than the stores in hand, wasted with criminal levity, should happen to last. They jeered at the caution of the Marshals, at the orderly traditions of the excellent regimental officer class of battalion and company commanders and efficient sergeant-majors who, derived every now and again from the old regime, or had graduated in the days of the Revolution, alone kept the machine as a whole in gear. Their career had promoted them rapidly over the heads of men beginning to grow grey, who were called upon to resign themselves, never to rise above their restricted spheres, and at last, when their term of service had expired, to return to a peaceful country to spend the rest of their lives in the placid bosom of their family circle.

Napoleon knew these men and esteemed them. He was aware how essential they were to prevent order and discipline from wholly from his ranks; to turn them into a mob, to train them in the first principles of war, he knew, he could not. He acknowledged their services, and made a point of emphasizing and rewarding them, he was at the same time alive to the necessity of restricting them to their lowlier round of duties, because he could not replace them or train others to replace them. As long as this stock lasted in the French armies, with it and thanks to it a certain measure of order and discipline still obtained; but when this stock had at length been almost entirely exhausted on the battle-field of Aspern, in the Peninsular wars and in Russia, the armies deteriorated into hordes.

It was only in the Guards, whither the Emperor had transferred the remnant, that, if not strict discipline, at any rate a sense of order, cohesion and uniformity in tactical exercises still obtained. Napoleon had the gift of improvising rough droves of conscripts, only just put into uniform, into soldiers on the enthusiasm of the moment and of training Commanders, but not those indispensable connecting links of the great chain. His incessant wars rendered it impossible for him to keep his eye on the internal morale of the army. Every army runs more or less wild if it is not from time to time withdrawn from the unrelieved tension of campaigning life to the rest and orderly conditions of the base.

This internal disintegration had not yet set in during the Prussian or Russian wars, but was beginning to spread in Napoleon's armies. The theatre of the war, distracted Poland, in the throes of a Revolution, never accustomed to a settled course of events, rich, it is true, in natural resources but devoid of all conveniences, superadded to a winter characterised by the most abominable weather conditions, contributed to it. There was an atmosphere of tension between the senior Commanders and the "troupe dorée" of younger generals.

The Prince of Neufchâtel saw the germs of the mischief in the armies. Of the Marshals, Davout was the only one who always maintained strict and exemplary discipline, and, however much his despotic rule was the curse of every country he occupied, history will in due course do justice to his virtues. Above self-seeking as his character was, he never took the veriest trifle for himself or his establishment. He made prompt payment for everything beyond what was due to him as a Marshal for his big household and Staff, and enforced the same conduct on the generals subordinate to him. He kept his supply officers strictly to heel. He never accepted table money or presents of any kind himself, and was careful to see that none of his subordinates did. He wrung the requirements of his forces sternly inexorably out of the provinces, but he was equally

able in punishing every high-handed exaction; and a crust of bread thrown away might easily have a death sentence for its sequel. The provinces in which he held command always felt secure in his incorruptible sense of discipline. But his suspiciousness, that made him see an enemy of the Emperor in every non-Frenchman and always scented conspiracies, and his blind devotion to Napoleon, whose orders he carried out with relentless severity, made him hated everywhere.

Other Marshals did not maintain the discipline, the loss of which they deplored, with the same measure of success. Murat was perhaps the kindest of them; wherever he could, he tempered the oppression of the countries out of sheer humanity; but he also overlooked the excesses of his men when the privations they were undergoing amounted in his view to suffering. Soult, Suchet, General la Tour-Maubourg and many others stood for discipline; Ney and Bernadotte least of all. Victor endeavoured to emulate Davout's severity, but was not qualified to enforce discipline as strictly as the latter. Mortier was well behaved but weak in intelligence and character, a mediocre commander, and lacked the personal prestige among his troops necessary to keep them in hand.

Masséna was the victim of an avarice that adopted any methods conducive to his own enrichment. This weakness impelled him, against his better judgment, to lenience; it was less the soldiery that plundered than, following his example, his generals and contractors. Marmont, too, stood for discipline where his own interests were not affected, but he had small sympathy for human suffering. Augereau at times held the reins slackly, but never as slackly as Ney; Macdonald was more humane but never strict enough. Bessières, a man of fine character, did not always succeed in keeping the Guards, whom Napoleon himself spoiled, in hand; but he, like General Nansouty, set his face against looting and missed no opportunity of tempering public distress. Lefèvre was not a bad man, but coarse and underbred, and it usually depended on his mood

whether he punished or approved the depredations of his troops. Gouvion St. Cyr stood for discipline; only ill-health and his many wounds prevented Oudinot from being as active as Davout in keeping his men in hand.

It was only up to the date of the Russian campaign that all these Commanders were in a position to act in accordance with their character, because it was only up to then they had trained soldiers under their orders; they could only begin to teach the conscripts of 1813 to fight; there was no time to acclimatise them to discipline.

Far as these senior Commanders were from agreeing among themselves, they none the less combined in their opposition to the aspirations of the junior generals by the common bond of jealousy. The fear of seeing their deeds eclipsed by the good fortune that audacity, often enough recklessness, favours; of finding them ousted from the Emperor's good graces by the spirit eager for any dare-devilry of enterprising youth; the desire to be in a position to enjoy the favours of fortune, which, while they were being plunged from one war to another, appeared almost valueless, had roused a craving for rest. They were most of them between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five when, after a stormy youth, a man begins to look for a settled domesticity. They could hardly expect to win a higher degree of fame, but might well jeopardize the reputations they had made. The prospect of war had therefore ceased to have any attraction in their case. Even the high ambition that may well have stirred in some of them to win promotion to sovereign rank, to win crowns for their own wearing, was debarred by the pretensions of the Bonaparte family, whose members had won thrones, or, with the solitary exception of Lucian, aspired to them. To be called on to sacrifice their achievements for the sake of the Emperor's sisters and Prince Jérôme, whom they held in contempt, went against the grain.

A man capable of diverting the Emperor from his vision of future conquests could have counted, without any formal

agreement, on their quiet co-operation. The approval of every genuine patriot, not dazzled by the mirage of new triumphs in arms, was assured him and history would, in time to come, have hailed him as a benefactor of France and of the world.

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### III

## TALLEYRAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE

THIS was the fame the man, who had hitherto been the soul of the counsels of Napoleon's cabinet and by his skill in negotiations had perhaps won no less for him than his victorious armies, aspired to gain, and at the same time to reconcile a sorely injured Europe.

Talleyrand believed that the military fortunes of the French had by this time reached their apogee, at which they should, and would have to, call a halt. Their conquests had at that date reached the border-line beyond which their further extension would cease to promote the real power of the State, and would only tend to weaken it. "There are no conquests left for our arms to make," he said. "It is our business now to conciliate the good opinion of Europe." On this principle he had induced the Emperor to make his friendly overtures to the King of Saxony, and he was now trying to involve him in negotiations with Prussia which were designed to offer this State very favourable terms after its disasters, and to identify it with the interests of France.

Convinced of the great political importance of a federation of German States, he had created the League of the Rhine. He regarded the incorporation of Germany as a French province as an impossibility, but its dependence on the head of the Federation could only be tolerated by transferring it from the House of Hapsburg to the Napoleonic dynasty. He had won the Emperor for this policy by the flattering parallel of Charlemagne. He regarded Russia

as a Power that would perforce have to be debarred from its dangerous intervention in European affairs, and this could only be done if its nations felt confidence in Napoleon, if Austria and Prussia, counterbalancing one another by reason of their own jealousies, were, as great units, to become the eastern bastion of Europe.

For this purpose, however, it would not do to weaken Prussia, it would have rather to be strengthened. Poland, as an independent State and unmangled, was designed to win the strength and enthusiasm of a warlike people for the King of Saxony. Talleyrand, however, could not ignore the fact that the most formidable foe of France was England, which, inaccessible to her arms, had hitherto been the only Power to draw incalculable advantages from the fifteen years of the Revolutionary wars, and to it alone could fresh advantages accrue by a prolongation of the general upheaval. So long as there was a Continental Power left, it could arm it for its own purposes against France; every attempt to make the Cabinet of St. James' less intractable had failed. But at this juncture, after the crushing blows that had destroyed Prussia's reputedly invincible armies, he hoped the moment favourable to opening up negotiations had arrived.

Talleyrand liked the English nation. He regarded Pitt's policy as the most astute and at the same time the most logical a statesman had ever pursued. He often enlarged on the subject without reserve, as indeed he was in general not as guarded in his speech in intimate discussions as one might have expected in the case of such a circumspect statesman, so that I often thought it likely he was of set purpose making no secret of his views, indifferent whether his conversation were reported to the Emperor or not.

On one occasion at dinner, when General Lemarrais, an adjutant-general, and one of the Emperor's favourites, happened to be of the company, conversation turned on cabinet-making, and, in the course of it, the merits of English craftsmanship were extolled.

"Even in accessories," someone said, "the workmanship



CHARLES—MAURICE DE TAILLYRAND, PRINCE OF BENEVENT  
*From the painting by Isabella*





is excellent, and even if it were only a wooden ruler (*une règle*) you couldn't buy a better one anywhere than in London."

Talleyrand rejoined, "C'est que les anglais sont toujours en règle, savent toujours tenir la ligne droit en politique comme en tout; leur but peut être détestable mais pour l'atteindre, ils ne s'écarteront jamais de la ligne droite, qui est la plus courte."

When on similar occasions he saw an opportunity of paying the English a compliment he never failed to take it. He praised their customs of, *e.g.*, celebrating the birthday, not the day of christening. He liked talking about his stay in their country, and this always frankly and cordially, though always giving the reasons for his commendations so that it was impossible to discern any set purpose behind them. Perhaps it was not done without a reason; because, once one knows a little about diplomatic gossip and small talk, and how carefully the table talk and unguarded utterances of eminent statesmen are snapped up and passed on, there is reason to suspect that Talleyrand had no objection to having his reputation for a predilection in favour of everything English being bruited abroad. But this is in itself evidence how keenly he desired some political *rapprochement*.

He regarded it as a possibility for the first time after the collapse of Prussia. The new English ministry still seemed undecided in its policy; the nation wanted peace; the Regent had, so far, not given expression to his views. It was only with reluctance, therefore, that Talleyrand had drafted the decree of Berlin that was designed to bar every coast to the English, but, as it was conditional, this measure could be rendered inoperative. He strongly opposed the sequestration of English goods on the Continent. He had lent his warm support to the protests of the mercantile interests of Leipzig, Hamburg and Bremen that were raised against it. He asked me for a memorandum on the Leipzig trade in which the case for free trade was, even in the interests of France, based on the contention that purchasers

from Southern Russian and the Turkish provinces always gave definite wholesale orders for goods of the most varied description, and would henceforward cease to look for French goods in Leipzig once they could not buy English wares there. Tenacious of accustomed methods, in accordance with the habit of Orientals, they ordered these goods in Leipzig, and once their order had been refused there, they would soon accustom themselves to having their silk, cloth and other textiles imported by the English.

I succeeded in drawing up this report with the assistance of Councillor Ferber. Talleyrand, who was pleased with it, passed it on to the Italian minister Aldini, who discussed it with me and endorsed it by a further memorandum, setting forth the importance of Leipzig for the silk-spinners of Lombardy. But everything broke down on the overwhelming need of money for the East Prussian campaign.

The restoration of Hanover, in which the Regent took a keen personal interest, and which was now beyond reconquest by force of arms, and the prospect divulged to the ministers of future concerted action with Russia against English commercial interests, left two channels open which yet might lead to reconciliation with England and thereby to a lasting Continental peace. Talleyrand continued to buoy himself up with the hopes of convincing the English Cabinet, or of inducing it to recognise, by pressure of public opinion, that many of the advantages arising out of the war might, on the conclusion of peace, be shared by England.

But it was essential that Napoleon should cease going on giving the English Cabinet a pretext, by his speeches no less than by his measures, for reconciling the nation to their policy by the bugbear of his name. The objective on which Talleyrand staked all his efforts and all his influence was to persuade the Emperor, even against his own inclination, to adopt an attitude of moderation.

For this purpose he had entered into alliance with the Prince of Neufchâtel and the Secretary of State, Maret, Duke of Bassano. This triumvirate were in reality

Napoleon's privy council and unquestionably exercised the greatest influence upon him. Talleyrand controlled his foreign policy, but his sphere of influence extended over home affairs in so far as Napoleon, as First Consul and Emperor, was to a certain extent in opposition to the nation and the several factions in France. He had incontestably been Bonaparte's tutor in statecraft in the full meaning of the word, and was still the Emperor's Mentor, but the latter did not prove equally amenable at all times to the other's influence and authority based, as they were, on superiority of judgment, on long practice, and on force of habit.

Talleyrand, a descendant of the old house of dukes of La Tremouille, had, owing to his misshapen feet and his limp, been brought up for the clerical estate. To his eminent talent of statesmanship he united a ripe scholarship, an immovable strength of character, a rare capacity for seeing through people, and a quiet, imperturbable presence of mind. He had resigned his office as Bishop of Autun during the Revolution, and his liaison with an Englishwoman, Miss Grant, whom he afterwards married during Bonaparte's consulate, debarred him from resuming it. He had survived the storms of the Revolution until, under the terrorists of Robespierre's regime, his descent from a house of ancient nobility and his one time ecclesiastical preferment amounted to unpardonable crimes. His wealth, which at the very outset he had removed to safety in England, enabled him to live respectably during his enforced sojourn there. He had returned to France during the Directory. As the First Consul's minister it was, in the main, he who set a term to the Revolution by laying down the lines for his friend on which he, as head of the State, united the interests of all factions by associating them with his own.

Talleyrand's political principles had always aimed at a limited monarchy, his predilection at a tempered oligarchy. He attached value to birth, but much more value to brains; he was the author of the policy of the coalition of all factions

in which the Emperor had hitherto been so signally successful. The equipoise of the powers in the State was his persistent aim, and, if he had tolerated military autocracy as a necessary evil of the times, he was now working the more zealously to counterbalance it by endeavouring to wean the Emperor from his lust of conquest and to direct him to the internal organisation of the State. He was incontestably the ruling spirit of the Emperor's privy council, and only one man, his deadliest enemy, the *ci-devant* rampagious Jacobin Fouché, may perhaps have been his match in cleverness. Convinced of the necessity of winning him over, and the Jacobins with him, he had not opposed his inclusion in the Ministry. Fouché never had Napoleon's confidence to the same degree as Talleyrand, Berthier and Maret, nor did he accompany him to Headquarters of the army.

The world at large has conceived quite a different idea of Talleyrand's character, but I still do not believe that I was wrong in my judgment of him. He never was the skulking villain they always tried to paint him; he was too much of a genius to have to fall back on craftiness. He was too proud for petty duplicity. But if he always contrived to safeguard the Emperor's  
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not outmatched them in cleverness and keen judgment. All the outcry about duplicity, whereby they allege to have been tricked, has never been endorsed by proofs, but might be quoted as evidence of their own inferior ability. All the moral liberties he took in negotiations, at the conclusions of peace, alliances and the like, were no worse than those of Castlereagh, Hardenburg and Metternich.

More valid objections might perhaps be urged against the morality of his methods in suppressing the Revolution in France, but it should be borne in mind that the condition of things at that date cannot be measured by normal standards, that the evil had reached such a degree of malignity that it could only be deracinated by its own methods. Very often his own life was at stake; self-defence must be

the excuse for a great deal. In a struggle of this nature, the morality of the methods adopted may be judged on some such scale as the morality of homicide in war. The lamentable death of the Duke of Enghien, for which Talleyrand was not to blame beyond that he did not prevent the sacrifice, must be regarded within this category. Fouché and the Jacobins demanded it inexorably as a pledge that Napoleon would never make terms with the Bourbons, that he would never sacrifice them to the relentless hate of the aristocrats. At no other price was their assistance against the faction of the old time Royalists, at that date in the ascendant, to be purchased. The merit which posterity will not deny to the subject of such diverse judgments lies in the fact that his purpose was the restoration of peace, of law and order, that he never lost sight of it, once his hands were freed for action, and that his range of vision was not confined to the momentary advancement of France, but embraced the consolidation of the prosperity of Europe as a whole, even if it were to be conditional on the hegemony of his native country.

Berthier and Maret were not on the level of Talleyrand's genius. If the latter's intellect and foresight often proved the guiding light of the Emperor's path, the former furnished him with able hands to make it effective.

Berthier, Prince of Neufchâtel, derived from a reputable house of financiers. He was the eldest of the three, and in 1807, on February 2nd, when Talleyrand completed the fifty-third year of his age, was close on his sixties. In spite of a rough exterior, he was not an unkindly man and, although hard and irascible, was amenable to reasonable representations. His often cross-grained manner was, as a rule, a consequence of the pressure of work, under which he all but succumbed. All the problems connected with the needs of the army and of their transport in war were thrown on him as Minister for War and Chief of the General Staff. The armies were scattered from Bayonne to the Bug, from Calabria to the Helder, and as far as Stralsund; they were shifting their position incessantly,

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had to be supplied and directed, and the whole of it passed through the Prince of Neufchâtel's hands. However ably his office staff supported him, he always was and remained the clearing house through which all business was transacted.

The organisation of his office alone is evidence of extraordinary business capacity. The great difficulty was that he had to carry all of it about in his own head to be able to tell the Emperor at any minute what forces he had available at this, that, and the other point of the vast area, always ready, when the fortune of war or Napoleon's orders had laid one point bare, to close up the gap. Although lodgings were always prepared for him, he very rarely had a chance of seeing them, because he had to be within the immediate call of the Emperor, if possible under the same roof, often with very cramped accommodation, had to be in attendance on him at lunch as well as dinner, when the latter would put incessant questions to him with every new scheme as it arose in his restless brain and, what was the most exacting of all, was called away from his work with every evanescent idea. He had to keep himself accurately informed about the strength of the Allies, as of the Emperor's armies, of what they were capable and might be capable.

It is hardly surprising that, amid the immense pressure of business, so many subjects, so many overlapping departments, he had little time for drafting and elaborating plans of campaign. It has been stated, entirely erroneously, that he inspired Napoleon's genius for operations. Napoleon's operations emanated from and were worked out in his own brain, but without Berthier's gift for organization they could never have been carried into effect, or at any rate not as successfully as they were. The Prince of Neufchâtel's rare merit and almost incredible talent lay in the incessant organization and accumulation of resources, but their application belonged to the Emperor alone. Berthier was the infallible day-book to which Napoleon was referring every minute of the day to make sure how his

balance stood. For this reason he had to be in attendance on him on every battle-field, on reconnaissance, at every review, for choice on every ride, and without fail on every study of terrain.

That a man of this type was often brusque when he was interrupted, received the intruder curtly, almost discourteously, is pardonable. One had to put up with the fact that difficulties exasperated him, and he can hardly be blamed for not making himself particularly accessible. But on several occasions I discovered that he would listen to reasonable representations, and I will give one instance of it. After the battle of Jena the French had, at the instigation of the Prince of Pontecorvo, who at Schleiz and at Saalfeld had discovered the worth of the Saxon cavalry, dismounted our regiments at Magdeburg to remount their chasseurs and *chevan-légers*. Even Napoleon was satisfied with the efficiency of our cavalry and wanted as much as he could get, but, in the contingent of 6000 we had to furnish, we could only provide the 800 mounted troops they had left us. When I was discussing this point with Berthier in Warsaw, he wanted more cavalry and I had to fall back on the impossibility of furnishing it.

"What? Impossible!" he shouted. "You've got trained men, you've only got to buy their chargers and you've got the cavalry."

"Monseigneur," I replied, "apart from the difficulty of getting the horses, we should only have mounted infantry, not cavalry."

"What! I suppose you mean to tell me that your cavalry is better than ours which I intend to turn out on these lines."

"I only meant to say, sir, that these mounted troops on half-trained horses would not be the same thing our regiments were before they were deprived of their chargers, and I am afraid that a contingent such as this, turned out in a hurry, would not justify the high opinion the Emperor has conceived of our cavalry."

"You mean to imply that we have cut down the tree to

get at the fruit, like the savages. But you are not very far wrong. The Emperor saw fit to give this order against my wish. But the mischief is done and that is all there is to be said. I want good cavalry. How many can you give me?"

I gave him the figures.

"No more?"

"No more good cavalry. But I will guarantee that these five hundred chargers are good."

"It's a bargain," he replied. "Bring me your schedule to-morrow and I will put it to the Emperor that he can't wring more out of you than you have got."

Among this cavalry was the Cuirassier regiment that later on covered itself with distinction at the battle of Friedland.

Maret had talents akin to the gifts of the Prince of Neufchâtel. In every other department he was to Napoleon what the latter was in all branches of operations and military administration, and if the Emperor did not insist on always having him within call on campaign, he was never allowed to be out of reach and had to be in attendance on him everywhere, apart from purely military movements.

He was a man of about forty, of agreeable appearance, obliging and pleasant in conversation when you got access to him. In his account of his stay at Warsaw, de Pradt has said a lot of nasty things about him and denies that he was capable. I knew him less well, it is true, than the other two, but I saw enough of him to be able to state that de Pradt does not do him justice.

Maret was of a far more genial disposition than Berthier; he was fond of witty, agreeable company, especially of clever women, and his exacting duties were no doubt often irksome, but that he did not neglect them is vouched for by the fact that Napoleon employed him as his principal agent for so many years. That postulated not only great industry but thoroughness and lightness of touch in the transaction of business.

A man who had to be continually in attendance on Napoleon had to be always ready with an answer on any

question, to keep him informed on important matters at any moment, and could not afford to have a merely superficial knowledge of the matter. The ease and efficiency with which Maret contrived to discharge his manifold duties, touching on all departments of both home administration and foreign communications, are evidence of no ordinary brain. There is no denying that he did not possess Talleyrand's genius, did not combine that sureness of touch, the outcome of experience, that composure with the perspicacity and finesse of the trained diplomat in negotiations. But it was no easy task to be Talleyrand's second string under a man as volatile as he was obstinate as was Napoleon in the egg-dance of political diplomacy. Where he fell short was that he did not impress the Emperor to the same extent as the latter did and was not, like Berthier, an old companion in arms. But as Secretary of State he was the right man in the right place, and was in his own department as indispensable to the Emperor as a tool as Berthier was in his.

I do not know anything about his antecedents; they were not distinguished nor probably humble, for he had had a good education, and as a young man had been engaged in literary pursuits. It was one of the unlikely coincidences that these three men did not detest one another, did not work against one another at every opportunity. The sharp definitions of their functions may have facilitated the good understanding obtaining between them, but Talleyrand's intellectual predominance undoubtedly contributed to it. He had won them over to his views, and all three had joined forces in the endeavour to curb the Emperor's lust of conquest. But it would be a great mistake to look on this understanding as, in any shape or form, a sort of conspiracy against Napoleon. Men holding such prominent appointments, and necessarily bound to fall with him, could not afford to entertain schemes of this kind. Their aim was to direct him to a line of policy that, in conformity with the weal of France and his own greatness, tended less to the augmentation than

to the conservation and consolidation of the conquests won. This purpose called, above all else, for a *political legality* of method, calculated to enlist the confidence of nations and governments, a moderation in the exploitation of advantages gained, directed to allay suspicious fears and offering the weaker a sure defence in the amity of the strong. The French empire would, it was hoped, lay the foundations of more enduring strength on this conviction than on the dread of its arms.

I do not know by what methods the associated ministers hoped to induce the Emperor to accept their policy, but they were assuredly not revolutionary. Reasoned representations, identity of opinions and views which he would meet in all three, a presentation of the subject-matter in reports and conferences emphasizing the advantages of one and the dangers of the other line of action, intimations of the morale and the wishes of the nation and of the armies, indications of the signs of discontent at the incessant wars, of the exhaustion of the home country, of stagnation of trade, of the need for recuperation and so on—these seemed to be the methods by which they were endeavouring to call the Emperor's attention to his own needs and those of the country, for the consolidation of the structure he had raised so rapidly.

Talleyrand was in the strongest position to open the discussion with Napoleon, as he was in charge of foreign affairs, the treaties of peace, and the negotiations. There was a vague rumour floating about Warsaw that there had been a violent altercation between him and the Emperor on the subject of the need for peace in course of which he is alleged to have relied boldly on his indispensability and his services rendered. They even claimed to quote the very emphatic words that he was supposed to have addressed to his old friend and master of statecraft. The improbability that either the one or the other should have told third parties anything about such an incident throws doubt on the particulars of the current versions of the story, but it is pretty certain that something did happen and that some

such lively altercation did occur. Neither had succeeded in convincing the other, but it seemed as if the Emperor had not refused to sanction the attempt. He left for the army shortly afterwards.

In view of the embittered feeling between the Courts and the complete breaking off of relationships it was not easy to set overtures for pacific preliminaries on foot. Talleyrand did, however, succeed in creating such an occasion. Herr von Dohna, the eminent publicist, had come to Warsaw to negotiate, if not for the remission, for the postponement of payment of the Contributions on the part of one or two Prussian provinces. He was authorized only by the Estates and not by the King; Talleyrand received him with every mark of distinction. I frequently met him in the latter's company and at La Besnadière's in the evening, where he was treated with marked respect. A Privy Councillor, von Stägemann, a minister in Berlin to-day, arrived on a similar errand in Warsaw on behalf of Eichsfelds, and he, too, was received with every attention. He asked for—or perhaps a turn was given to the negotiations that obliged him to ask for—passes through Austrian Galicia and Russian territory to Memel, to obtain the King of Prussia's approval to certain arrangements to facilitate payment. His request was, on the mediation of the Prince of Benevent, approved about the date when General von Zastrow had taken over the portfolio of Foreign Affairs. Talleyrand turned this occasion and the consideration he had shown to a Prussian official to account by sending a polite letter to the new minister to congratulate him on his new dignity and to express the hope of entering into closer touch with him, because the appointment of a man of his moderate views gave reason to hope for a *rapprochement* which might lead to the desired results.

“Il est temps,” the letter read textually, “que les calamités finissent qui ont pesé si longtemps sur la maison de Brandebourg et qu'elle reprenne le rang qu'elle doit occuper entre les puissances de l'Europe.” There followed assurances of Talleyrand's readiness to enter into correspondence with

the Prussian minister and to do his utmost to remove any difficulties that might obstruct a reconciliation.

I do not know whether Talleyrand really hoped that this letter would lead to any tangible result or whether he only wanted in any event to invest the Emperor with the semblance of moderation. That it did not fail to make an impression seems to be evident from the tortuous answer. Zastrow had indeed become minister, but what weight he carried was still in doubt; in fact, the Prussian Court had assumed quite a revolutionary aspect, a succession of ministers followed on one another's heels, and every change indicated the King's suspicious vacillation between the two parties—the moderates who were aiming at a not too humiliating and oppressive peace, and the *enragés* who wanted war to the death with Napoleon. Both parties contrived to make the other look suspect, the former of having been bought by the French, the latter of trying to force the King by any, even if revolutionary, means to adopt their cause. The extremists had the active support of the Russian party, whom the King did not, however, wholly trust. The consideration which may have decided him to decline any approaches that might have led to peace seems to be the fact, of the accuracy of which there appears to be no doubt, that his salvaged treasury of some 14 to 16 millions they had prematurely sent to Russia, was entirely in the clutches of his ally. Even after the peace of Tilsit, its repayment, which they would only agree to make in Russian bonds, gave a lot of trouble and, perhaps even, later on, at the time of the Congress of Vienna, exercised no small influence on the destinies of Germany.

Zastrow's answer was evasive; it showed his personal inclinations and at the same time his impotence to carry them into effect, and wound up with the excuse that they could not take any steps without the Emperor of Russia, and would therefore first have to ascertain his views through Herr von Krusemark.

The continuation of the war was therefore certain now. The subsequent events of '13 and '14 have justified the

policy of the Prussian Cabinet. But if one looks beyond the issue in terms of success, which is far too prone to assume it to be the necessary consequence of an earlier line of policy, the question arises whether Prussia would not, in fact, have gained more and the whole of Europe been spared a good deal of misery if Frederick William had seized the opportunity for opening negotiations at that juncture, for Danzig at that date was still holding out, Prussia was beginning to recover from its first disasters, while the French, weakened and depressed by the fatigues of a winter campaign in inhospitable Poland, discovered with astonishment and dejection that they had won nothing more by the battles of Jena, Auerstadt and Pultusk than the prospect of a new, far more exhausting campaign, more exhausting than any of, including the Egyptian expedition, its predecessors—and their disgust in the case of some regiments went as far as mutiny.

But by its attitude of unyielding hostility Prussia reconciled its foes to the prospect of a campaign they disliked. At this juncture the King could undoubtedly have had terms for a far more advantageous peace than that of Tilsit, and he would not have paralyzed the efforts of the one man who, of all others in Napoleon's councils, worked hardest for moderation. And the country would have been spared seven long years of war.

Perhaps, indeed, there would have been no Russian war as that of 1812. Napoleon would have built up his empire on stable foundations, but he would not have been driven to rule Europe with a rod of iron. His fall would not perhaps have aggrandized Prussia with big territorial gains on the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Moselle and by half of Saxony, but the true power of a State lies, as Napoleon's example has proved, not in territorial expansion, not even in the population of its provinces, but to a far greater degree in their close and consenting union.

That moment was perhaps one of those turning points which Providence vouchsafes to enable states to mould and shape their own destinies.



For Napoleon, too, the moment was a fateful one. He did not, it is true, close the war with the supremacy which his enemies would fain ascribe to blind fortune, but he had reached the apex of his political greatness, because, however great and brilliant were the feats he achieved hereafter, they bore the germ of decay in them none the less. He proved to the world that his genius was only constructive, not conservative as well. Every one of his movements henceforward was, even if it seemed to be an advance, a falling back from his peak heights. How great and salutary Talleyrand's influence had been on his unquenchable spirit of enterprise the sequel showed.

Napoleon had guessed the association of his three confidential servants and made up his mind to discharge them. But he soon realized that he could not dispense with two instruments like Berthier and Maret. Maret won him by the devotion he showed in attending him under fire at Friedland and to points of danger. He was, no doubt, aware too that both, however necessary they might be to him, were only born to be subordinate to his genius. He was therefore able to forgive them.

Talleyrand's intellectual superiority would perhaps, if the man had been able to mount a horse, have proved beyond his endurance long ago. He now believed he had reached a point when he could afford to dispense with his old tutor in statecraft. Perhaps, too, his vanity was concerned to show the world that he was as great at the council table as in the field, that here, too, he needed no supporters, only tools. The peace of Tilsit together with the pacts it involved was the last work of the Prince of Benevent as a minister. After the return to Paris he was shelved in the honorific appointment of Vice-Grand Elector of the Empire, but the Emperor paid him the acknowledgment of retaining all the employees and principal officers appointed by him in the office of Foreign Affairs, he only gave them a new chief in the person of Count Champagny. The Prince of Neufchâtel became Vice-Grand Constable, and was probably not sorry to give up the War Ministry while

remaining Chief of the General Staff of all the armies. The Duke of Bassano retained all his previous appointments unimpaired.

On the Emperor's departure to the army I had at once applied to Dresden for orders, because my business with the Prince of Neufchâtel was terminated, and to follow him on his staff I had to have fresh credentials. The answer I received was to stay on in Warsaw pending the advent of an ambassador, Colonel Thiollaz. This man, one of the few of our staff officers qualified to go abroad with decency, was an offshoot of the Saxon house, a son of the Chevalier de Saxe, the youngest of the natural children of Augustus the Strong. His mother was an unmoneyed lady of Savoy. Whether the Chevalier was secretly married to her, I do not know, but no questions about his antecedents had been raised and he was appointed a groom of the chamber. As long as Prince Karl, Duke of Courland, lived, he spent ten months of the year under his roof and was to a certain extent accepted as a member of his household. He was generally popular, nor did he lack the intelligence and good manners to succeed at General Headquarters. He was, however, indolent and, slow in his conversation, had a habit of repeating himself. He had bored the Prince of Neufchâtel, who was always quick and abrupt, more than once by this mannerism, and the latter went out of his way as soon as he caught sight of him from afar. His mission became entirely useless for our purposes because he was now cut off from all opportunity of rendering any service to the Corps that had joined the French army under General Pollenz, and because he was too lazy to make such opportunities for himself or to take advantage of them when offered. He came to Warsaw, where the Prince of Benevent, to whom I presented him, gave him a rather chilly reception. His dilatoriness only served to confirm the French in the impression they had conceived of our lethargy. He took all information I was prepared to give him about the people with whom he ought to keep in touch without

interest, because he was relying on one of the Emperor's officers, Le Jeune, who had travelled from Dresden with him and with whom he had gone on to Headquarters. The latter, however, was dispatched to another appointment at once and so could be of no further use to him.

In March Herr von Globig at last arrived in Warsaw. He had delayed his departure from Dresden for some time and had travelled with great deliberation, because, in fear of the Prussian guerrillas prowling about the Silesian borders, he took escorts everywhere, and had made many halts. I took him to the Prince of Benevent, who was not attracted by him.

Globig is undoubtedly a man of brains and resolution, but at that date he was taking the first step in his diplomatic career. He had gone through the usual routine of our young agents. He passed from the University straight as a barrister and groom of the chamber into a profession in which a young man of gentle birth could at that date never fail to succeed even if all he troubled to do was to dance attendance at Court and on the ministers. In these cramped surroundings, in which he qualified by reading official

himself transferred into quite a new career amid surroundings of which he knew absolutely nothing. He tried to make up for his consciousness of inexperience by an assumption of dignity and thus to cloak his ignorance under an affectation of astuteness.

Both these mistakes were bound to make a bad impression on the minister, in fact it is difficult to make a greater mistake than to let a Frenchman see that you are intent on being clever, because they consider themselves the cleverest people there are, and only feel impelled to lay booby traps for the challenger and to gibe and make fun of him when he blunders into them. You got most out of them, especially out of Talleyrand, by a straightforward, quite simple manner that made no pretensions to cleverness.

Globig learnt his lesson at his own expense. As he had brought no definite instructions, although I had written urgently about the Schwarzburg matter and did not venture to take any step that had not been laid down for him, Talleyrand, shortly before I left Warsaw, gave him to understand that he regarded his presence there as superfluous and referred him in a minute, couched in his most caustic style, to Berlin, whither several other ambassadors had already betaken themselves to await the upshot of the war.

On my departure from Warsaw, Talleyrand told me that part of the diplomatic corps would be leaving the city shortly, and that only a few would be staying on with him, of whom it was improbable that Herr von Globig would be one, but he would gladly have made an exception in my case if I had been in the other's shoes. He finally offered me his kind offices in whatever quarter they might be of use to me, and added, when I declined them gratefully, that he respected me for being anxious to serve my master without the assistance of outside influence behind me, and that he hoped, from what he knew of the King's character, that he would appreciate my candour. He knew the King better than I did, and that Frederick never found out anything for himself, or, if he should, would pay no attention to it unless it were brought to his favourable notice by outside recommendations.

So Herr von Globig went to Berlin, where he literally had nothing whatever to do, and there he stayed until after the peace of Tilsit. Herr von Senfft arrived there and settled the affairs of the Duchy of Warsaw with the Prince of Neufchâtel. Globig's whole mission had therefore been entirely futile. He was not to blame for that, but the people who sent him to try his 'prentice hand on this terrain. Later on he learnt enough to shed his prepossessions and got to know men and women, and became a useful diplomatic agent.

#### IV ON DUTY—AND OFF

**D**URING my absence in Warsaw the King had promoted me lieutenant-colonel and appointed me his adjutant-general. On my return I took up my duties in attendance on his person, that is to say, as the four of us relieved one another every week, I had nothing to do for three weeks. During the fourth I had to take the guard-room report to the King at noon every day and to announce the governor, who received the watchword from him, be in attendance on him twice for hunting, and on Sundays and festivals in the church and to the play in the evening, to follow in his suite at Court, and when he played cards to stand beside the card-table until the game was over and the King rose for general conversation. Further, good manners enjoined one to appear at Court on Sundays when one was not on duty, at meets, and when there was company to dinner, the adjutant on duty always dined at the King's table.

In Pillnitz, where the King used to dine with the whole family every day, a cover was, of course, laid for the adjutant; in the evening he supped with the princes and princesses and the other members of the household on duty. A little before one o'clock he received the watchword from the King, attended him when he went out for a ride or a drive and on his evening stroll with the family. But when the King went out for a walk in the morning, only the chamberlain on duty was in attendance.

On all these occasions the King addressed very few or no remarks at all to him; the Queen and the rest of the family were all the more talkative to make up for it.

During the first few weeks I was on duty the King was very monosyllabic; he soon got into the way, however, of talking to me, and by degrees not only comments about the hunting and the every-day incidents furnished the topics of conversation, but politics, literature, public and military affairs.

Germany was at the time being flooded with a deluge of pamphlets about Prussia's collapse, about the defects in the constitution and the army which were supposed to have led up to the disaster, and so on; the King knew most of them and always formed a very sound opinion of them. But in conversation on subjects of this kind he was always trying to elicit the opinions and views of his interlocutor without expressing his own. You always had to be on your guard not to express too hasty an opinion, because he made a very accurate note of anything you had once said, and afterwards, not only in conversations, not only on kindred topics, but frequently in the course of a more serious discussion, would suddenly and quite unexpectedly put you in a quandary by interjecting :

"But the other day you expressed quite a different opinion on the matter."

If you tied yourself up in contradictions you lost his confidence, at any rate so far as this particular subject was concerned, but he did not take explanations, why you had expressed a different opinion on different premises on what appeared to be a similar case, amiss.

You had, however, to go to work cautiously because there was not always time to argue it out. I was careful as soon as I noticed that he started topics on which he wanted to elicit an expression of my opinion. I always inquired about the particular circumstances and supported or restricted my expression of opinion accordingly. If a doubt assailed me afterwards, I ventured to broach the matter on my own account with some such introduction as "Your Majesty recently touched on this, that, or the other topic, and I remember to have expressed the opinion that, and so on; I consider it my duty to admit that I was

not accurately informed of this, that, or the other circumstance." This pleased him, because he took it as evidence of the importance you attached to every one of even his most trivial utterances and of conscientious candour. On the other hand, he could not bear you to go beyond your terms of reference. If your answers went beyond the questions he had raised, he dropped the subject and very rarely returned to it. If you wanted to bring any particular matter up for discussion you had to endeavour to give the conversation on some kindred subject a turn to make it occur to him, and you might then feel sure that he would broach it himself, even if only several days later.

What was worrying him more particularly at the time was the French strategy, which he could not grasp at all. His trouble was the same as that of many other people that were trying to find an explanation in new tactics for what was, in fact, due to the bad organization and the worse morale of their own armies. There were only very few soldiers who had seen active service and they, most of them men of advanced years, had not moved with the times. Theory had superseded the morale of the individual as a factor in a military training that believed it possible to defeat the enemy by mathematical formulæ and only wanted automata for the purpose.

Its tenets were based on an entirely mistaken reading of the history of the Seven Years' War. Frederick's armies, made up of every nationality, of deserters and footpads as well as of the sons of their native soil, had been victorious. In the case of troops of this sort neither zeal for the cause nor affection for their own hearths and homes could be assumed; it was therefore quite unnecessary to enlist the interest of the common soldier in the struggle. Patriotism was to him a matter of complete indifference. He was expected to obey and to move in prescribed formations, otherwise nothing more was expected of him. They talked to him a lot about honour, much more a concern of the officers than the common soldier, who profited precious little by the advantages of

honour and, if he should happen to find himself commended in army orders, saw no prospect of being any the better off for it. It was an accepted general principle that the common soldier would have to make shift on bread and water. They thought they had provided for him adequately if, together with his pay, they gave him two pounds of bread a day and about as much meat as to give about half a pound to cover five days; all other requirements, including cleaning materials, he was expected to meet out of his meagre pay. (In Saxony, for example, they got, on war establishment, six groschen a month as meat allowance.)

With the intention, praiseworthy enough in itself, not to overburden the civilian population, they left the soldier to starve. Raiding of victuals was, very properly, subject to very severe punishments. A potato dug up in a field was criminal looting, but they quite overlooked the fact that a soldier had to live on something. In the Saxon army discipline was rigorously enforced; the Prussians were more inclined to be less inexorable, but they were still very severe on the common soldier, but overlooked looting and abuses in the case of officers who had not the excuse of need the soldiers had. It is an historical fact that there were very rarely complaints about the behaviour of the troops, but they were the more frequent and more general about that of the officers. Thus, half starved, clad uncomfortably, in accordance with the dictates of an insensate fashion, and exposed without protection to wind and rain, the soldier had to listen to harangues about honour, while they exposed him publicly to the contempt of the civilian population by degrading corporal punishments. He was bound to become callous to this incentive because the authorities had rejected every other as ineffective.

They had only learnt one lesson from the Seven Years' War, and that did not apply to more recent times; it was that the severity of humiliating punishments which might well have proved indispensable in an army such as the Prussian army had become during the years immediately



preceding the peace of Hubertusberg. True, more than two-thirds of it might have been composed of lawless adventurers who were fighting neither for their hearths nor their country, to whom it was a matter of indifference under which flag or for what cause they fought. But it is a great mistake to believe that they were staking their lives only for the honour of being maltreated in uniform. A very definite morale animated them; they were quite clear about their own motives. They were fighting for comfortable winter quarters, for a life of ease, for elbow-room, for ruffling it in a conquered country. As a general rule, the common soldier is better off when things are going well than when the campaign is a failure, in an advance rather than in retreat. His faith in Frederick's superiority and his luck always encouraged him to hope for these prizes, and he was quite prepared to face the dangers and privations they cost. It was therefore not patriotism that animated him, still less the ascetic honour the authorities preached forty years later. It was perhaps not a very exalted spirit that animated him, but it was the spirit of the army, a very active and effective spirit, which Frederick always contrived to maintain and rekindle. Thus, in the long run, his armies had, of themselves, become their own native land. Our armies at the beginning of the nineteenth century had ceased to be national armies because the soldiers were bondsmen. Victory itself was bound to become a matter of indifference to them because even after victory they were no better treated; crowded up in camps or garrison, they had to live on bread and water no more and no less than if they had been defeated.

Frederick knew his troops well enough to trust them only when fortune favoured him; he knew that he would not be able to rely on them in disaster, but his masterful gifts always contrived, even after disasters, to keep their faith in the return of his good fortune alive among them by justifying it. Further, he had a nucleus of trustworthy troops in his army, dwindling, it is true, from year to year, which he held in reserve to force decisions. In our

army we had reached a dead level. The light cavalry alone was an exception, for we had no light infantry. Plenty of units in the Prussian army were, it is true, so named, but their only difference from line regiments lay in external badges, not in their fighting value. Our light cavalry, on the other hand, however hard prejudice strove to level them down to the heavy, had necessarily retained certain material differentiations. Since they did not fight in mass but in small detachments, and were not herded with the others into camps and garrisons, they were in a position to procure many alleviations and acquired the habit of initiative, whereas the chief merit of the others lay in never being independent, but in being moved about like automata. Everything we had that had developed into anything worth having in a military sense, of effective value, had graduated under this method of training.

I ventured to put forward these views, quite new to him, to the King, by instalments, whenever he discussed French tactics with me. At times they disturbed him so much that he broke the conversation off short. But he always returned to them. The meat allowance, more especially, worried him. He thought he had been doing something handsome, and was amazed when I made him see that, even if the commanding officers took the trouble to bring cheap meat within the reach of their men, they could not on their six groschen a month get more than three pounds. He was aghast when I told him that for three whole days before the battle of Jena the troops had had no bread, that they had had to fight on empty stomachs. He was always interrupting, quite curtly at times, a sign that he had been pondering over the matter. Acceptance of my theories, he argued, would mean that all military discipline would go to the wall. I countered that by contending that unless primary needs were met, no discipline of any kind could be maintained unless they were prepared to break the spirit and the vigour of the men, and instead of a unit of soldiers were content to take a charity school into action.

prejudices inculcated into him could outrun his intelligence. There was, for example, no point on which I found him more rigid and obstinate than in the dress of his officers. He seemed to regard an uncomfortable and disfiguring uniform, that did not fulfil its primary purpose, the preservation of health, and had not even the excuse of inexpensiveness, as an indispensable qualification of a good army, and regarded it as his sovereign duty to conserve it with relentless severity.

Ignorance, even downright incapacity, the grossest blunders on duty, even offences against discipline, even against morality itself, did not shut the door to forgiveness, but transgressions against dress regulations were crimes that always cost the offender any credit for efficiency, blocked his promotion, and hall-marked him once and for all as an incompetent officer. The prejudice went so far as to include civilian attire, at any rate as far as the Court was concerned, so that a man who was old-fashioned, stiff, and even slovenly in appearance was thereby invested with the presumption of capacity.

The King and the Royal Family were always ten years behind the mode of the day. Prince Anton, who once or twice had made the attempt to dress correctly, had met with severe reproof on this very score, and, since he could not appear in Dresden Court attire on his journeys to Vienna without making himself look ridiculous, he had an outfit in duplicate which he always changed at the frontier. The Court itself was the quaintest *omnium gatherum* of caricatures. Some of the old generals looked regular scarecrows, and the gentlemen and ladies of the Court proper used to appear in the most grotesque costumes, not infrequently dirty to boot. Even a man who did know how to dress with propriety had, when he appeared at Court, to adopt some old-fashioned accessory or omit something pertaining to the finish of his attire which always made him look unkempt or uncouth.

In the case of the chamberlains and grooms of the chamber, Marcolini insisted with great strictness on certain

arbitrary rules of attire which were always based, since no definite regulations were laid down, on the principle that it must be unbecoming. The consequence was that for years no one had bought more than the most indispensable Court dress, and every one went on wearing it until it was so shabby that it could hardly hang together. Propriety would never be outraged thereby, nor by its greasiness. The generals, and more especially the adjutant-generals, purchased their costly but ugly uniforms from their predecessors, though their gold lace was tarnished and their shreds and patches were palpable from afar, because they had often passed hands from one generation to another and had been clumsily fitted to the build of their new wearer. The officers were never allowed to appear except in powdered hair and in tightly buttoned, disfiguring coats. And because, in their case, even if they were going to private parties or crossing the street, the authorities insisted on the regulations, known as the "Pattern" (*Probe*), with undeviating strictness, and expulsion from Dresden, refusal of leave thither for several years, arrest and continual bickerings with pedantic staff officers were the inevitable sequels of this severely punished crime; it brought the very material evil in its train, that the younger officers on leave in Dresden did not go into society, where they either had to show up as figures of fun or run the risk of severe reprimand, and, to the detriment of their education and probably of their morals, restricted themselves to the, without exception, inferior coffee-houses and beguiled their leisure by gambling, tobacco-smoking, and beer-drinking.

No one who knew Saxon military life and the Saxon Court before the battle of Jena will regard this description as exaggerated. The oppressiveness of this pedantic crusade against the mode under the Ministry of Low, who was a fanatic supporter of the scheme for converting all officers into monastic anchorites, was carried to lengths with a harshness it is difficult to conceive. This in every other respect estimable man, with an intelligence quite

out of the ordinary, and a genuine concern for the welfare of the army, was a monomaniac and an intolerant zealot on this point. He impressed the Elector so deeply with his ideas that insistence on the "Pattern" had become one of his foremost duties as a sovereign. This eccentric zeal against what was, to a very great extent, an imaginary evil did not stop short of injustice, and an army order of 1804 or 1805, signed by the Elector, made the colonel and staff officers in their garrison depots responsible for breaches of the "Pattern" of which officers on leave in Dresden might be guilty, and the major in his garrison—perhaps 20 kilometres away from the place of the crime—was to be placed under arrest if an officer of his battalion in Dresden was caught "improperly dressed" from the "Pattern" point of view.

Stronger evidence than this order, which must still be filed among the records of all the older regiments, can hardly be adduced of the strange aberrations into which prejudice can lead a kindly, beneficent, just, and in other respects discerning ruler when he had once accustomed himself to take opinion on trust without further investigation, to regard it as sacrosanct and its enforcement therefore as a duty.

Although sumptuary regulations are among the least important of a sovereign's duties, yet this anxiety of the pedantic uniformity of military attire in the middle years of Frederick Augustus' reign is too characteristic to be omitted from any account of his mentality. Uniformity of dress is admittedly necessary in a standing army to enable friend and foe to distinguish the officer; it is of advantage to him because his uniform gives him an attire in which he can appear any and everywhere, and because it saves him considerable unnecessary expense. Arbitrary changes ought not to be allowed, otherwise these advantages will be nullified and purchase of a new uniform become obligatory at any minute. For this very reason it ought not to be modelled on the lines or cut on the pattern of some passing fashion; it ought never to be out of fashion.

Its essentials are, that it be comfortable, afford protection, not too expensive, and closely fitting to the figure. There should be no difficulty in hitting on lines that hold the mean between the extremes of fashion. Perhaps the garb that is quite distinct from civilian dress, the Hussar uniform, for example, is the best because it eliminates the temptation to ape any fashion.

But it is only fair to give young men a uniform that is neat, not necessarily conspicuous, in which they look well, so as not to become ridiculous in company by contrast with civilian dress. The proverb "Clothes make men" need not be read sarcastically only. A man who appears in polite society in dress that gives him a stiff, clumsy or obsolete appearance must be a man of weight or worth to live down the impression made by his first appearance. A young man, in whose case external impressions constitute the bridge that leads to closer acquaintanceship and the development of character, loses, if he is conscious of conspicuous lack of taste in his dress, the ease and assurance so necessary to him in any society where he is a stranger. The consequence is, as it was in the case of the Saxon officers, that he keeps away from polite and more educated company and takes his pleasure in coffee-houses and gambling dens.

All these considerations had been disregarded on the introduction of uniforms in the Saxon service. About forty years ago they had taken the mode that happened to be ruling at the moment, and this, without further ado, had been accepted as the most appropriate "pattern" for an officer's wear. Every variation from the "Pattern" was regarded as rebelliousness against the wisest and most salutary institution. But even in this respect they had not been consistent, because, however heinous a crime they made it against a youngster if, by way of example, he shortened the flap of his waistcoat by an inch or two or did not have the pockets of his coat low enough in the knee, every exaggeration of the "Pattern" uniform, as, for example, the lengthening of the waistcoat flaps and the like, was

accounted no deviation from the regulations. It was only anything aiming at a more becoming, smarter appearance that was regarded as criminal, for the intention was that an officer should not please the eye, but that he should mortify personal vanity by deliberate disfigurement.

Often as the attire had been quietly altered since 1770, this principle had always to be the main consideration, and, owing to the arbitrariness of the Higher Command, the regulations had become positively despotic, because the "Brass hat," sometimes from sheer parsimony, wanted to go on wearing an old coat, sometimes because he or his adjutant suffered from lack of taste; at others, owing to the speculations of a regimental quartermaster or of a contractor anxious to get rid of old stock, they never hesitated to alter the "Pattern" and to frustrate the sole benefit it might have conferred, to wit, economy.

When I first broached this subject to the King, I found him so convinced of the propriety and advantage of the accepted "Pattern" that he was hurt that it could be called into question. He had kept a vigilant eye on the officer's dress without ever having accounted to himself for the reason of the regulations. I first threw out the suggestion, based in general on the introduction of a uniform dress for officers and the importance of allowing no variations, that neither colonels nor generals ought to be permitted to vary it any more than the most junior subaltern, and when the King agreed, I called his attention to the many ever-changing regulations issued almost every year.

"I have often objected to them," he replied. "But they always assured me the order was necessary and in accordance with the wishes of the officers themselves."

I could only query this latter statement, but was easily able to convince him of its baselessness on the score of utility. He agreed, too, with the principles on which the choice of uniform ought to be based. None the less, things went on as heretofore. The Inspectors-General issued arbitrary orders of which I only succeeded in checkmating one or two that were just a little too foolish—the sabre-

taches of silver foil for the Hussars, for example. But I did at any rate obtain some alleviation of the severity of proceedings against transgressors, and modified the King's preconception that the outstanding merit of an officer lay in being pedantically and unbecomingly dressed.

These and similar discussions were always interrupted by three weeks' intervals when I was off duty and other matters intervened that called for immediate attention. Our contingent, 6000 strong, was on the march to Poland under General Polenz. These troops showed the first symptoms, so far unheard of in Saxony, of mutiny, and showed the urgency of reform in the army. True, the men had been surreptitiously played upon by partisans of Prussia who made them believe that the King had only been forced to throw in his lot with Napoleon, would seize the first opportunity of changing sides, and would be pleased by any mischance befalling the French. They argued that he had sent the troops against his will, in fact did not know that they were on the march, because he was entirely surrounded by Napoleon's creatures, who hoodwinked him about the true state of affairs and carried out their master's orders in the King's name.

There is no nonsense too great for the mob to believe when it is once attuned to credulity. And the ill-will of our old staff officers and company owners had seen to that. According to the Saxon system the latter had been adequately indemnified for the usufruct of their companies. The authorities had maintained the old system, not in itself so very inequitable as other parties were in their own interests at pains to represent it, of regulating their pay by this interest. But in ill-advised parsimony they had cut down the compensation the owners might equitably look for on a war footing, and had only, by a monstrous abuse, allowed it in the case of owners of regiments "whether they move into the field or stay at home." For the latter received a certain monthly allowance per man for the cost of subsistence of their regiments; on war footing, when the cost



of subsistence was reduced, this allowance was doubled and allotted to them as table money. Nothing could be more equitable. But this allowance, which in the case of a line regiment amounted to over 800 Reichstalers, was only granted on the assumption that the owners themselves led their regiments in the field so as to cover the costs of their own subsistence and that of their adjutants. It therefore ought to have been all transferred to the brigadiers, who, if the owners stayed at home, led the regiments in the field and had to provide for their adjutants' subsistence.

As the regulations expressly provided that the owners, in view of receiving these "increased head-fees," as they were called, were not entitled to table money, there seemed to be no shadow of doubt about it.

In spite of that the self-seeking of the army aristocracy had introduced the abuse, that the stay-at-home old generals, who were owners of regiments, pocketed this allowance, and only, if they intended to behave very handsomely, voluntarily allocated a fourth or sixth of it to the brigadiers representing them; but some of them kept the whole amount for their own use. A brigadier without a private income of his own was therefore always in dread of active service when he found himself confronted by the necessity of incurring debt. The company owners were in a worse plight, more especially in the infantry, where their incomes depended mainly on the number of men on leave. If a company, including the captain's pay, was worth some 750 talers, the latter on active service was with increased expenses expected to make ends meet on "pay reduced to 500 talers." This reduced income was not, of course, calculated to make active service attractive to them. The senior captains, content with a quiet life with a reasonable income, had for the most part refused promotion and had allowed themselves to be passed over in favour of younger and more ambitious subordinates, and had counted, during the long spell of peace, on seeing no more active service. They had welcomed the issue of Jena and the conclusion of peace, but they were aghast at discovering that peace

with Napoleon did not, in the first instance, mean immediate idleness at the depots and the quiet administration of their companies. They had, it is true, a grievance against the system that was bound to impoverish them on active service, but not against a change of policy that had nothing to do with it.

But it is rare for people labouring under a sense of grievance to attribute the ground they have for complaint to its true cause.

The army was honeycombed with grievances about the French alliance, to which all discomforts and misfortunes were attributed, and sighed for the good old times when we were allied to Prussia, just as if the Prussians had anything to do with giving us these good times.

Grousing in general is characteristic of the Saxons, because everyone hopes to make something out of it in the long run.

Without any regard for propriety they all, from General von Oebchelwitz, commanding the infantry, down to the most junior captain, gave utterance to their grievances within earshot of the common soldiers, and anyone who did not approve was branded for a receiver of bribes or "pro-French."

Vaticinations of fresh and far greater disasters were as a rule tacked on to the complaints. The Allies were reported to be disgracefully maltreated by the French and "there was no means of reasoning with the people." In quite a short time Napoleon was reported to be defeated on every front and on the brink of ruin, in which he was going to involve us. They were astonished, they failed to understand why the King could not realize it and was acting so foolishly; he could not, it is true, know about everything that went on; he must be hoodwinked, deceived in the most iniquitous way, and this could only have been effected by an entourage bribed by Napoleon, and so on.

If the common soldiers heard those ill-considered allegations every day from their immediate superiors, whom

they are accustomed to believe implicitly, the secret Prussian agents must have had an easy task in inciting them to mutiny, not against their King, but against General Polenz, who was represented to them as being a supporter of the French. Even in Saxony and in their march through Prussia the spirit of unrest was obvious, and it was fanned by all they heard in the Mark (of Brandenburg) and in Silesia, so that when they had a day's rest in Posen, a town with very pronounced Prussian sympathies, the hospitality of the innkeepers with plenty of spirits did the rest. When they were ordered to cross the bridge of the Warthe, one battalion refused to march, the others followed its example and broke into open mutiny on February 27, 1807, when the force opened fire on their own general, and were only called to order and forced to continue their march by a regiment of Cuirassiers that had been brought up.

But with this single explosion the whole of the nonsense evaporated. The troops themselves felt ashamed of their behaviour and from that moment displayed the most exemplary obedience. During the siege of Danzig and in the engagements of the battle of Friedland they fought gallantly, in fact with distinction, and, as the French treated them much better than the Prussians had been wont to do, because both in rations and in fatigues the absolute parity among the Allies obtained, they soon became the most cordial supporters of the French and shouted "Vive Napoleon! Vive Frederic Auguste!" whole-heartedly.

The King was very upset by the news of the mutiny; it hurt him to have to punish a breach of discipline among his own troops. He was in a dilemma how to apologize to his ally for such a palpable display of aversion on the part of his army. Fresh cause for embarrassment supervened. The rapid advance of the French through Silesia, where the strongest fortresses surrendered after the feeblest resistance, was pulled up sharp as soon as a man of intelligence and resolution like Graf Götzen took command at Glatz and united, under his command, the isolated Prussian

contingents, split up by the quarrels among their leaders and paralyzed by their suspicious distrust of the King.

Napoleon had, as was his way, neglected the side-shows to throw his whole weight into the main issue, the operations in the centre. Silesia, to all appearances an easy conquest, the prestige of the capture of so many famous fortresses, had excited the ambition of Prince Jérôme, the Emperor's youngest brother, and the Emperor, anxious to give him the opportunity of making a name for himself, had made him Commander-in-Chief in Silesia. If, the enemy at that date had adopted the only tactics that could have been applied successfully against him, if they had reinforced their flanks but withdrawn their centre in steady retirement, he would have reached the term of his career of conquest there. The propulsive power of the masses which he drove on like a wedge was irresistible. By resisting him point-blank, their strength was shattered in the clash which his superior talent always knew how to direct purposefully and decisively. Discouraged by the loss of a main line battle, they gave up everything for lost, including the success they had won on the flanks, and sought their only salvation in a hurried peace. If at that juncture the Allies had supported Danzig in strength, had flung a strong force into Kolberg, as it would, as masters of the Baltic, have been easy for them to do, and had sent a plenipotentiary to Silesia, whither it was not so easy for them to transfer troops, with full powers to legalize the efforts and the aspirations of the populace and of the considerable, if scattered, fighting forces, and had at the same time carefully avoided every decisive engagement in Prussia, Napoleon would have been automatically compelled to retreat at any rate as far as the Vistula.

Sickness, as the consequence of a winter campaign in a Poland bare of all comforts, had already taken its terrible toll of his armies. While I was in Warsaw, twenty-seven stationary hospitals had been opened in the barracks and biggest palaces, but they still fell far short of providing accommodation for the ever-increasing number of sick.

New hospitals were being opened in the smaller towns and in the country seats every day, and prowling marauders infested the country from Breslau to Kolberg. The latter, it is true, as they were waging war on their own account, confined themselves to highway robbery, intercepting couriers, and raiding moneys that small villages had collected to meet the French imposts. They thereby became a pest to the country for which they claimed to be fighting, because the districts had to pay the Contributions and consequently had to find the money twice over. The inhabitants dreaded them more than the French themselves. But they might, if the Prussian Government had given them a leader, have proved quite serviceable. There was indeed a time when they had cut all the lines of communication in the rear of the army so effectively that a courier rarely got through, and communication became so difficult that Prince Talleyrand (*sic*) himself, since no banker in Warsaw cared to risk a bill of exchange, was glad to accept a loan of 500 ducats, which he repaid me within a fortnight.

It was, however, fated that Napoleon's opponents should have recourse to measures of this kind only; instead of weakening the French by guerrilla warfare, they only endeavoured to pile up formations to oppose and to be smashed by Napoleon's main army.

All the officers who had deserted after the battle of Jena were received with open arms in Königsberg, whereas the first one who had succeeded in getting through ought to have been sent back to duty forthwith.

The most critical moment the Allies allowed to elude them was the time just before and just after the battle of Eylau. Napoleon had, it is true, won a victory by his persistence because he held the field of battle, but was not in a position to exploit it. A victory of sorts, bought at too high a price by the sacrifice of his best troops, may prove quite as decisive as a defeat in turning the issue of the campaign against the victor, if the defeated do not lose

their heads. Napoleon was so weakened by his losses in battle and by sickness in his army that he had to call up all details that could in any way be spared from the fallen fortresses, from Silesia, from Pomerania, and from Lower Saxony. Magdeburg was so denuded of troops that the numbers of prisoners of war exceeded the strength of the garrison by more than four to one. In all the Elbe provinces of the Prussian state the rising against the French had been prepared to the last detail, all parts allotted and confirmed by the King himself. Magdeburg must infallibly have been wrested from the enemy. Nothing prevented its outbreak except the absence of a leader for whom they had appealed to Königsberg in vain. It was an organized conspiracy extending its ramifications even into Saxony, and closely connected with the rising in Posen and the bad behaviour of our troops in Silesia, and was only directed by Graf Götzen, who was much too far away.

The conspirators had rallied round the Duke of Weimar, who, while he was engaging in the peace negotiations in Posen and had subsequently bespoken an hotel in Warsaw, where he had his arrival announced from week to week, fancied himself in the part of the Saviour of Germany, the restorer of the Prussian monarchy, and the one and only ruling prince worthy of his German name, amid the plaudits of a number of sentimental or astute supporters from whose midst the notorious Tugendbund was subsequently recruited.

But when the scheme was ripe for execution the Duke's courage failed him. He retired suddenly, the chance was missed, the secret could no longer be safeguarded, and the French police, becoming alert, dispersed the League by dispatching its most active chiefs, with no less leniency than astuteness, as hostages to France, where they were very decently treated and after the peace were repatriated without further molestation, though their country had in the interim been incorporated in the Kingdom of Prussia.

Prince Jérôme was not the man to make up the loss of the men he had had to send to Warsaw by his talents as a general. As Napoleon's youngest brother he had had no share in his early fortunes beyond his sudden promotion from the status of a private individual to the rank of an Imperial Prince. He was good-natured, but frivolous and irresponsible, like any other young Frenchman; had neither the firm fair-dealing of his brother Louis nor Joseph's scholarship, least of all the gifts of Lucian and Napoleon. His rapid rise in rank had fostered all the self-confidence of one born in the purple with the hotheadedness of an undisciplined, wealthy youngster. Because he had grown up to be the brother of the most powerful monarch in the world, he regarded nothing as impossible; everything had, in his opinion, to give way to his mere wishes, his whims, and even every naughtiness whereby he meant no harm had to be permitted him. He was therefore capable of committing acts of great harshness and injustice, not of any evil intent, but from sheer irresponsibility. Human beings did not count at all in his eyes. They were only there to submit to every whim of the Bonaparte family, called by destiny to rule over them.

It was undoubtedly one of Napoleon's mistakes not to have balanced this brother by an experienced commander. General Hédouville, who had held the command in Silesia before him, seemed to exercise little influence over him; perhaps the Emperor was depending more on Lefèvre-Desnouettes, one of his favourites; one of the dashing young men of his military Court to whom he at times allowed a good deal too much influence.

Lefèvre distinguished himself more for his headlong valour, his unshaken faith in the star of French good fortune, and for his indifference to the value of the means he sacrificed to the end than for the prudent circumspection of a leader who never despises the enemy, leaves as little as possible to chance, and balances his commitments against his means. Leaders of this sort were bound to be in a quandary when the fighting ceased to be a case of

carrying all obstacles by their courage and vigour. Mountain warfare more especially proved beyond them, and the Imperial Prince, who was as offhand in his dealings with crowned heads as with every one else, thought the short cut out of his difficulties was to send instructions to the King of Saxony to send him another 10 or 12,000 men as reinforcements.

Some weeks previously a dispatch from the Emperor had come in requesting the King, as all the ruling princes of the League were increasing their contingents by a fifth, to do the same as soon as he saw his way. As in our circumstances the equipment of this fifth might call for some arrangement, he did not intend to order it to Poland, but desired it to be held in readiness, if occasion should arise, to take the field in Silesia.

They had consulted me on this occasion because some doubt had arisen whether this fifth was to be calculated on the basis of 4000 or only 1200 men. For, in accordance with the terms of the Peace of Posen, the Saxon contingent was fixed at 20,000, but for the present war had, owing to the country's exhaustion, been reduced to 6000. I advised them to assume the contingent of 6000 as their basis of calculation without raising the question, because we should undoubtedly get away with it, as we had confidently and repeatedly affirmed it was all we could do. But if we began to inquire whether they wanted more, they would imagine we could do more and most certainly not let us off. At the same time I advised the equipment of the 1200 with all dispatch, and to pay especial attention to the cavalry fifth, because the Emperor and Berthier attached considerable importance to it.

I repeated my suggestion to send one or two officers to the district of Kalisch, where we would be able to buy back our chargers, surrendered to the French, at the very reasonable rate of two or three ducats apiece. For the French cavalry had been unable to sit our well-broken but fast chargers, resentful of clumsy horsemanship. The regiments, remounted on them, had given them up during



their short stay in the district, just to get rid of them, by compelling the country folk to take them partly by way of exchange, partly for a few talers. The lack of control in the French army in times of big movements of troops made abuses of this kind easy. They pretended the horses were not fit for military service and no one made any further inquiries. But General Dambrowski, who was organizing a portion of the Polish insurrectionary army in Great Poland, was well aware of the value of these horses, and the inhabitants, who foresaw that they were going to be requisitioned in any case, were trying to sell them at any price so as to get at least some of their money back.

The King had approved my proposal because I was able to endorse it by the very definite evidence of the offers that had reached me. But remounts were in the department of the Inspector-General of Cavalry. The latter raised a lot of difficulties. Since I had renewed my suggestion, the King instructed me to discuss it with General Zastrow.

"He is making a lot of fuss about it," he added. "I don't know what he does want."

Zastrow raised one objection after the other. When I had met them all and had pinned him down he exclaimed angrily, "But what's the use of the blessed peace if we have got to mobilize again? I suppose before it's over I shall be called up myself."

There was no rejoinder possible to the General's comment. The King wanted to put the suggestion through, but Count Marcolini was against it as well. He had acquired, partly from the Government stud, partly by purchase, large numbers of barely three-year-old colts which he was trying to sell to the King, although they could hardly be fit for service in another year's time, at the inflated price, though it had been agreed, in the case of consignments for the cavalry from the studs, of 225 talers apiece. As he himself did some horse-dealing surreptitiously through the Jews and men of straw, cavalry remounts were a source of profit and, as almost all our





regiments were dismounted, he did not like the desirable opportunity to elude him. Permission to purchase the horses was therefore not granted, not even the two hundred we wanted urgently. When I attended the King to Warsaw the following winter, I showed him the regiments in the Polish army mounted on Saxon chargers which still retained our saddles and saddle-cloths; for we could have repurchased these too, at the same low rate, and have effected a saving of over 200,000 talers even if we had only repurchased half the horses without their saddles and accoutrements.

So, as the horses could not be furnished at once, they took their time in equipping the infantry. There was a lot of time wasted in conclaves of how it could best be done at the cheapest rate. They began to get out contracts and then started quarrelling again whether they had to equip 1200 or 4000 men, assured each other it was quite impossible, dismissed the men on leave, and, to cut it short, had done absolutely nothing at all when the new French ambassador Bourgoing, to whom Jérôme had addressed himself, sent in his demands.

Bourgoing, who had made his name as a scholar by his work on Spain, was a clever and, by nature, a very upright man, but his innate timidity had been increased because in a previous appointment in the North he had incurred Napoleon's displeasure by undue leniency and for a time had been virtually in disgrace. Talleyrand, who liked him, had made his peace with the Emperor, but he was always afraid now of giving offence by committing his previous mistake. So now when Napoleon's brother addressed him, he thought his whole career was in jeopardy unless he at once dispatched the whole of Saxony to his aid.

I had turned an interval between my weeks on duty to account by paying a flying visit to my former depot in Thuringia, where my squadron was quartered, and I had had one or two important matters to attend to.

In my absence Bourgoing had insisted on the dispatch of the reinforcements so imperiously, had threatened the

full brunt of the Emperor's displeasure, had infected Marcolini, Bose, the minister, and the King himself with his own alarm to such an extent that they were all flustered. In their quandary, I was the only man in whom they felt any confidence, and an orderly, who met me in Naumburg, was sent to fetch me. On arriving at Dresden the first step I took was to press for the immediate equipment of 1000 infantry, whom 200 cavalry were to follow at the shortest possible interval. I maintained that we were bound by the Emperor's instructions and that, without denuding our frontier that had been violated by Prussian marauders often enough, we could not furnish more than 1200 men. That, too, was the King's view, but they were scared by Bourgoing's insistent zeal and threats. I therefore had to negotiate with him, and soon satisfied myself that it was only his own alarm that made him so insistent and goaded him to making excessive demands. He became calmer when I told him it had been decided to send me to the Emperor and to represent the impossibility of our doing more for him. He thought that relieved him of responsibility and became much more placable. He had scared the King and the ministers, more especially, by the mutiny of the troops in Poland and had painted the Emperor's wrath against the whole of Saxony in most lurid colours. Some steps certainly ought to have been taken by our Court to apologize for this unpleasant incident, or at least to express the King's displeasure at its occurrence, but we assured ourselves that we had an agent at Imperial Headquarters and that Colonel Thiollaz was sure to have put the matter in its right light, but we forgot that he could only express his own apologies and that, in the case of an extraordinary and unforeseen incident, he would, to assuage the Emperor's wrath, have to present some instructions or other issued to him by our Court.

The Saxon habit of leaving a man, once he had been appointed to a post, to carry on entirely on his own initiative had held good in this case.

Now, when everyone was scared, my instructions were

to offer apologies for the mutiny in Posen and at the same time to represent the impossibility of complying with Prince Jérôme's demands for reinforcements. I pointed out to Graf Bose that the one mission might stultify the success of the other, but amends, however belated, had to be made. I only hoped to be dispatched to the Emperor's Headquarters at once, but learnt they had decided to send me to Warsaw to discuss both matters with the Prince of Benevent.

It was to no purpose that I submitted that the latter item at any rate did not come within the sphere of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and that all matters relative to the movement of troops in war-time should be deferred directly to the Major-General and to the Emperor himself. They still had a rooted objection against all transactions with Headquarters, and Graf Bose considered it beneath his dignity to enter into communication otherwise than as "*de ministre à ministre*." I submitted the suggestion whether it would not be equally dignified to communicate "*de ministre à souverain*." Or whether it were not even a case that could be most easily transacted "*de souverain à souverain*." All the concession I succeeded in getting was that if Talleyrand considered it necessary, to go on to Headquarters, and in this event to hand a letter from Graf Bose to the Prince of Neufchâtel. Bourgoing sent his dispatches, and the King and Graf Bose promised me that the 1200 reinforcements should be dispatched to Silesia without delay.

In my rapid passage through Bautzen and Görlitz I expedited their equipment by waiving most of the proper authorities' objections on my own authority, and traversed the unsafe zone between Görlitz and Liegnitz unmolested. Talleyrand and La Besnadière gave me a very cordial reception in Warsaw, but both of them told me that my business did not concern the minister, but the Major-General and the Emperor himself. I then asked for passes to Headquarters, but there were difficulties on this point, because the Emperor did not want any diplomatic . . .

round him and told Talleyrand not to issue any passes. He agreed, however, that a mission on a purely military matter was an exception and promised me my passes, which he would endorse by letter. He decided the query about the 1200 men on the spot, as I had expected he would, and I sent my orderly back to Dresden with the news together with one or two dispatches to the ministers. After a stay of a few days which I spent in Talleyrand's, and in the evening at Comtesse Tiszkewicz', I got my orders to proceed at once. But I could not take the direct route to Headquarters at Finkenstein, but had to take the long way round by way of Thorn.

What a lot of time might have been saved if they had allowed me to go straight to Finkenstein!

My business met with less difficulty than I had expected. Our small affairs were not of such importance to the Emperor as they fondly imagined in Dresden; he had forgotten all about them in the rush of work of organizing the great campaign he was about to launch. He had conceived, once and for all, a poor opinion of our infantry but a high one of our cavalry, and it gratified him that the Cuirassier regiment had behaved so well at Posen. But he now had had very good reports of the conduct of the whole Saxon Corps before Danzig. Our soldiers, accustomed to the scanty rations of earlier campaigns, were in the best of spirits, as they were treated on the same footing as the French troops, and instead of their wretched rations got good bread and meat, vegetables, salt, beer and spirits in liberal quantities as well. It was the first campaign in which they had not been on short commons in the midst of plenty. They found out that they had been fooled by the complaints of their old captains and by the agitation of the Prussian party, paid no more attention to them, and were devoted body and soul to old Marshal Lefebvre, who asked nothing more of them than to fight stoutly, and looked after them paternally in return. Because they had expected the French to make them play second fiddle,

they thought all the more highly of them for not asking for preferential treatment in the matter of rations, of which in the prosperous environs of Danzig there was no lack. They were on the best of terms with them and fought stoutly and cheerfully.

So easy is it to win the good graces of the rank and file if you will only see that their needs are not neglected.

When, in the audience Napoleon gave me, I referred to the Posen incident, he said nothing beyond "They were led astray," and I was glad to leave it at that.

The Prince of Benevent, who was present, alluded to the fifth we were to send to Silesia. He had found in Graf Bose's dispatches an elaborate return, drawn up by our War Cabinet in accordance with their rules of procedure, from which he only gathered that we had not got any. He handed it back to me with the remark: "I don't understand that. Here is a return of several thousand men and then you say you haven't any." I explained that the men were there but that we were short of arms, because our troops had been disarmed after the battle of Jena and our arsenals emptied; it was not, therefore, due to ill-will, as he suggested, but, with the best will in the world, sheer impossibility prevented the King from supporting Prince Jérôme as strongly as, for the sake of his own security, since the fighting was so close to us, he could have wished.

The Emperor asked me abruptly: "How many can you give? I have asked the King to furnish a fifth by way of reinforcements. All members of the League have furnished as much."

I replied that the King had complied with his demand forthwith, and that this fifth should have reached Prince Jérôme that very (it was the 3rd May) day.

"Is that true? Are you sure of your facts?"

I repeated the assurance, adding that the next courier from Silesia would probably bring the news of the arrival of these troops.

"Good," he said. "Then that's all right. Tell the



King I do not ask him to denude his country of troops, but he would do well to have these troops in readiness as soon as they can be made available."

He then talked of other matters, about hunting, about the state of districts through which I had passed, and so on, and dismissed me in a very pleasant manner.

The Prince of Neufchâtel asked me once again on the following day whether I was sure of my facts. When I said "yes," he asked, "Then why all this stack of papers? If you had not explained the thing to me I should have assumed that you were refusing to do anything. I don't know what M. de Bourgoing's trouble is; he does nothing but complain. What is he interfering for? It's got nothing to do with him; it's my business, surely? Two words would have been enough; you could have written to me. I know you."

I replied that I had no authority to do so.

"Why not?" he said. "You can correspond with me; that would save time, and, as you are the King's adjutant-general, it would obviate all difficulties."

But they appeared to dislike short cuts of this kind in Dresden. I was very careful, both in addressing the Emperor and Berthier or his *chef d'état-major*, General Camus, never to mention the "*cinquième*" without the qualification "*de 1200 hommes*," and they never asked for more. But that was not enough for them in Dresden; I ought to have got an assurance in writing that they would not ask for more, but I certainly could not have done that without admitting that we were in a position to furnish more. All the confirmation I could get was that in Colonel Thiollaz' hearing I referred to the 1200 men more than once and handed their nominal roll to General Camus.

A few days elapsed before I could be sent back, and I had an invitation for the whole time for lunch and dinner at the Prince of Neufchâtel's table, where he himself never appeared because he had all his meals with the Emperor. General Camus did the honours, but even this mess, at which Berthier's adjutants, the Emperor's orderly officers

and the Allied officers attached to Headquarters had their meals, gave evidence of the shortage of food prevailing in these territories. Bread was scarce, and then only made of barley: beef, rice and potatoes were almost the only ingredients the cooks had for preparing their dishes; dried vegetables were a luxury; at a gathering of more than twenty covers only two bottles of ordinary wine were served for dessert, beer was substituted for table wine. There was great difficulty in keeping up the supplies for the troops, crowded into an area without much elbow-room, and the shortage of fodder was, more particularly, acute. There were no signs here of the plenty obtaining round Danzig, and it was a stroke of luck for the reputation of the Saxons that from the first moment they had been sent into action and to the fleshpots of Danzig, and not here where inactivity on short commons would have fostered the spirit of discontent.

The French endured the discomforts of shortage and of still pretty severe weather cheerfully enough in the prospect of the impending opening of the campaign, and the Emperor kept them busy with frequent field days. The regiment often had a march of six German miles to bivouac for a night near Finkenstein, to be reviewed by Napoleon on the following morning, to carry out some evolutions and then to start on their way back to their wretched bivouacs. Their excellent bearing under such adverse conditions often used to astonish me. In spite of their march and bivouac, they turned out for the review as smartly, as clean and polished, as if they had just stepped out of their quarters in the most well-furnished depots. All of them were alert and cheerful and must have inspired the highest hopes in the Emperor. A first-class army was assembled around him, and the decrease of sickness in spring was gradually emptying the hospitals.

The Allies must have suffered heavy losses at Eylau, because they gave him time to recover his strength gradually. Even their superior light cavalry remained inactive, though, if it had harassed his communications, it might easily have

compelled him to have concentrated his forces still more and, as that owing to the shortage of food was impossible, to have fallen back across the Vistula. Warsaw was so denuded of troops that a thousand Cossacks could easily have raided it, for the Vistula too was only lightly held; above the city neutral Austrian Galicia was its strongest buttress.

It often occurred to me that Headquarters themselves were none too safe against a bold raid. Finkenstein is a mansion pure and simple without a village, only a cluster of small, one-storeyed houses for the occupation of its employees, now overcrowded by the staff of the Imperial Court. The guard, which was relieved every day and drawn from the neighbouring cantonments, was only a hundred strong, even the Prince of Neufchâtel's general staff was crowded out of Finkenstein and billeted with General Camus in the little town of Rosenberg some ten miles away. The cantonments were distributed in such a way that it was possible to reach Finkenstein without encountering one of them. The castle grounds had no other enclosure than a sunk fence, which I often crossed without being challenged by the few sentries posted along it.

An extensive wood, several miles long, in which it was easy to approach under cover, extended to within 150 paces of this ditch. Napoleon's rooms in the first storey gave on to the gardens, the guard-room was on the opposite side in the courtyard, and he himself was in the habit of strolling about the gardens with only Berthier or one or two generals in attendance. The Prussians could hardly have failed to have an accurate map of the country and information of the conditions which every inhabitant of the countryside knew. Nothing would have been easier than a raid on Headquarters, but at that time they did not know how to use the Cossacks.

The first thing I heard on my return to Dresden was that instead of the 1200 men they had succeeded in assembling 2000 men and had sent them to Silesia. We flattered

ourselves on having made a "coup de politique" thereby and to have acquired great merit in the Emperor's eyes. I was unable to share this view. The additional 800 men were a drop in the bucket; Napoleon in all probability, more especially as they never came within his personal view, never knew anything about them, but it well might happen that a stray general might quote the surplus against us as evidence that we lacked the will, not the means, in refusing to comply with some demand. In my opinion we should have been wiser to have retained these 800 men to have them in hand when a new demand was made on us. But since we had given them irrevocably, I was assured that Colonel Thiollaz had had instructions to report it to the Emperor and the Prince of Neufchâtel.

I made no secret of my view either to the minister or to Graf Marcolini; the former took offence at my attitude, but the other insisted that we had placed the Emperor under an obligation. It proved impossible to undeceive him, however clearly I explained to him that we were only doing M. de Bourgoing a favour, who, as regards the Emperor and Prince Jérôme, would credit himself with having wrung these 800 men out of us. I could not even succeed in getting Colonel Thiollaz to receive instructions, to emphasize this evidence of our good will, "M. de Bourgoing had undertaken to do that."

The Prince of Neufchâtel's remark, "What has M. de Bourgoing got to do with it?" fell on deaf ears; so did the hint the Prince of Benevent had dropped on the same matter.

"You were wrong in addressing yourself to me. I can't do anything for you in this matter, nor can M. de Bourgoing; it can only lead to an exchange of notes between my office and the Prince of Neufchâtel's, that will only mean delay, and in all military matters the Emperor looks for prompt action. It surely is not a diplomatic issue. It will only annoy him. Believe me, and try to persuade His Majesty to believe it, that it is a great advantage for you to be in a position to negotiate with the

Emperor direct. He gives you every opportunity because he has a high opinion of the King of Saxony. The King of Württemberg, for whom he has no personal partiality, gets everything out of him because he eschews all proper channels and addresses him direct. The Emperor rarely refuses any concession to a sovereign who shows he trusts him, but all sorts of difficulties arise in the clerical departments."

Referring to our weakness of transacting all business through the French and not our own ambassador, he said to me on another occasion: "I recommended a man for the appointment of whose moderation I am assured, but you must not forget that he was appointed to represent our interests, not yours. If you insist on creating a Viceroy for yourselves, you have only yourselves to thank for it."

Experience taught me all too quickly how correctly Talleyrand had gauged our weakness. I can fairly flatter myself that I always made every effort to counter the ever-extending influence of the French ambassador. I effected nothing thereby beyond incurring his animosity. I could have made myself ruler of Saxony if I had made common cause with him, for no protest availed to exorcise our passion for being ruled: Graf Bose's vanity was tickled by transacting his business as Minister of Foreign Affairs in direct conference with the Emperor's minister; he was swathed in diplomatic etiquette and thought he could do everything single-handed; he settled everything that should have passed through the hands of our ambassadors either at Headquarters or in Paris with M. de Bourgoing. As he was generous enough not to take exception to home truths I said to him once:

"Does not your Excellency consider it beneath your dignity to set up an intermediary between the Emperor and yourself? Instead of acting through an ambassador, dependent on you and subject only to your instructions, and of dealing directly with the Emperor or the Prince of Benevent, you condescend to deal with a subordinate of

M. Talleyrand, and to make him your spokesman, whereas he only ought to be your intermediary.”

At first he was offended by this way of putting things and gave me the cold shoulder for a while, but in the course of time he thawed and in the long run admitted I was right; rather late, it is true, in the course of the winter of 1808-9 in Warsaw after Bourgoing had become too powerful.

Marcolini was more to blame for this subordination than Graf Bose, who, after all, had maintained some semblance of dignity. The former, however, had no conception of anything of the kind; he conceived all dignity to consist in arrogant demeanour towards every one whom he believed to be below him and from whom he had nothing to gain; he made no bones about giving away the King's prestige if he saw any profit for himself by doing so. His aversion from travelling or any other interruption of the even tenor of his life was always at grips with his dread of letting the threads slip out of his grasp, and the great influence Graf Bose had acquired gave him no peace. Nothing could be more welcome to him than the custodianship of an ambassador under whom he hoped to dominate the Court no less autocratically than under the King. Since he had the distribution of gifts and finances in general under his control, he could count on the ambassador currying his favour rather than Graf Bose's. He was, however, astute enough to allow the whole relationship to be initiated by the latter by stimulating his vanity of doing everything himself. The King, accustomed to being under tutelage, always most at ease when he could persuade his conscience that he had done nothing arbitrarily, that he had had to do this, that, and the other thing, because it was the will of God as manifested by a stronger power, acquiesced cheerfully. I made no secret of what Talleyrand and Berthier had told me. I showed him on incontestable evidence that Bourgoing counted for very little so far as the Emperor was concerned, that it was impossible to take him for a trust-

worthy mouthpiece of Napoleon's wishes: he was not annoyed by this, and even admitted I was right because he had seen through Bourgoing's weakness long ago, but he put up with his tutelage none the less.

My mission had proved fruitless because they had found 2000 men instead of 1200; consequently everything I had learnt and gathered there carried no weight. This curious way of reasoning is one of the contradictions characteristic of the King, because he generalizes everything; he either throws over a matter entirely or he accepts it whole and none the less only takes half-measures. It is impossible for his sound common sense not to have told him that, if the object of my mission had been stultified by his own action, the other results I had brought back were none the less valuable, but that would have involved him in differences with Marcolini and with the relief of his conscientious scruples; his religious fatalism felt more comfortable in shelving all responsibility on to the Emperor, or on his ambassador, or on God. In order not to be disturbed by my representations he preferred to assume that they were based on uncertain foundations, because they were the outcome of a mission that had proved unnecessary.

Bourgoing rapidly became the dictator of Saxony; he not only arbitrarily controlled our foreign policy, but our home administration as well. If he did not interfere more actively we have only his moderation, and possibly, too, his reluctance from becoming embroiled in them, to thank for that. Things reached such a pitch that no promotion could be made effective without his approval, and that his recommendation to a post always led up to its appointment as infallibly as his objection blocked it, and that he even intervened in the ritual of our Court etiquette. Talleyrand had no doubt given us on the whole a very modest man who did not like abusing his position, and in the long run he conceived a liking for Saxony and endeavoured, so far as he could, to be of service to us, but, apart from



KARL WILHELM FERDINAND VON FUNCK AS ADJUTANT-GENERAL  
*Military Museum, Dresden*





the disadvantage of cringing under the domination of a French Viceroy whom we had imposed on ourselves, Bourgoing's prestige damaged us on three material points; he never forgot, and he was never allowed to forget, that he was in the service of the Emperor, not of the King of Saxony; that on every occasion when the interests of his master clashed with ours he had no consideration for us or for the possibility of giving the matter a different complexion by representation to the Emperor, and, in order to secure supporters for himself, not only every French general but every military or civil official who passed through Saxony had to be conciliated and their—often ill-mannered—behaviour acknowledged by presents for which they were bound to regard themselves indebted to, not us, but the ambassador. He himself was not a man of large means or had had losses during the Revolution, he therefore turned his prestige to account to supplement his fortune by presents for which he contrived to find endless occasions, and finally he established a regular system whereby the French ambassador exercised a sort of guardianship over Saxony, not only as regards his own successors, but even as regards the Saxon authorities, who henceforward looked on the French ambassador, not on the King, as the fount of honour who dispensed fortune and promotion, as a power against whom their sovereign was unable to protect them. It was not Napoleon's system nor his oppressive rule that alienated the heart of the people from the King and that brought about Saxony's downfall, but this ill-starred submissiveness to his ambassador.

They regarded my mission to Finkenstein as quite useless, but it soon transpired that this was not the case. To scrape together the 800 men over and above the contingent demanded, the two very slovenly regiments of the Oberlausitz, made up almost entirely of unfit or recruits, had been hurriedly mobilized. They, especially the Nieschmeuschel regiment, were composed almost entirely of adjoining Silesian tribes which had always been attached

to Prussia and had been worked upon by the latter and the influence of the Herrnhuters, which had always been strong in the Lausitz and was active in every family. The officers especially were rabid in their hatred and loathing of the French. They were now to fight shoulder to shoulder with them, and instead of breaking them in gently, as in the case of their compatriots besieging Danzig, they put them into the line at once.

General Lefebvre-Desnouettes brigaded them with Bavarians, at whose hands they had a rough reception and who were particularly disliked by them for their disorderly behaviour on the passage through the Lausitz. They were pushed up by forced marches, and carts had been requisitioned to accelerate the pace, but the transport was undisciplined. The rough Bavarians took a high hand with the Saxons and monopolized the carts, provided for the whole body, for their exclusive use so as to travel in greater comfort. The raw recruits who did not know whether they were free to resent it were jeered at as they tramped alongside. Their officers, antagonistic to everything French, did not stand up for their men, and some of them were not displeased to see everything at sixes and sevens. The Bavarians in their carts were of course the first to arrive at the villages where rations were issued, and took everything for themselves, and on their arrival the Saxons found nothing left. Chivied by these methods for two days and one night, they went straight into the line, whereas the Bavarians had been resting and recuperating *for several hours. At dawn the fighting round Kant* began. The exhausted troops had orders to take a hill, and they advanced resolutely, but when, after wading through a marsh, the Prussians on the crest of the hill advanced and charged them, cheering, one and a half battalions threw their muskets away and took to their heels, but were for the most part taken prisoners in the swamp. The other half of the infantry, consisting of more seasoned troops, behaved well, and together with the Bavarians covered the retreat.

The news that reached Dresden, though toned down as much as possible, upset the King. He communicated it to me, and I advised him to be prepared for demands for fresh reinforcements being made on him. But before any decision had been reached, one of Prince Jérôme's A.D.C.s, Colonel Morio, arrived at the ambassador's, and laid all the blame for the mishaps in Silesia at the door of the Saxons and urgently demanded the dispatch of fresh troops. He had arrived in the course of the night and had travelled on at once to meet a French commander at Chemnitz or Leipzig, but was expected back on the following day, but had scared the unhappy Bourgoing to such an extent that he thought his whole career was in danger unless he could improvise an army for Prince Jérôme on the spot. Morio stated that, in addition to the 2000 men we had sent him, the Emperor had approved a further fifth on the whole of our agreed contingent, that is to say, 6000 Saxon troops, and, as the Emperor could not make mistakes, he must have called on us to furnish it, but we had not complied with our obligations. The 2000 we had sent were wiped out, they therefore had to be replaced at once and raised to 6000 by the fifth. Bourgoing was now pressing this demand on the King urgently and half distractedly, and insisting that I must have misunderstood the Emperor and that he never would succeed in convincing the Emperor that we had sinned in error and not of ill-will.

Graf Bose had me summoned to the Cabinet at an early hour, where I met Bourgoing, who had lost his head entirely and had infected the minister, the King and Marcolini with his own alarm. It took a little time before I could grasp what it was all about; and I did not know in the least what I had done wrong, as Bourgoing kept exclaiming over and over again, "That is Saxony's ruin and mine as well—you are ruined and so am I," and the like. At length we got down to the point of what the Emperor really did say to me.

I repeated my earlier report and referred to the dispatch I had sent in. Graf Bose had it in his hand, but did not

return it to me; instead, he asked me to sit down in the Cabinet at once to write it out all over again from memory. The ambassador in the meanwhile went home and the minister to the King. When he returned he compared the two reports, and, as I had had time to collect my thoughts and was alone with him, I succeeded in inducing him to see Bourgoing's alarm from the right angle. I asked him at the same time to let me see the dispatches sent to the Inspectors Zastrow and Oebischelwitz, of which they could make neither head nor tail. He had them fetched and meanwhile sent me to see the King.

The latter, who always had himself well in hand, spoke, it was true, with every appearance of calmness, but I could see how very upset he was. He had both my reports in front of him and put a number of questions to me to trip me up in contradictions by picking out every single word that might vary one report from the other. But as I was too sure of my ground not to be able to answer him without any hesitation and with every confidence, he became perceptibly easier and asked me at last what I thought he ought to do. I replied that I considered he had no choice but to bring the 2000 men he had given up to strength and to appoint a colonel or general in supreme command of the unit as a whole body, as had not been done so far, but not to commit himself to anything beyond that.

I then had to take this proposition to Marcolini, who had fallen sick with terror, but found comfort in my assurance of the quite definitely expressed orders of the Emperor, and then very naively made fun of "poor Bourgoing's" terror. It was not so easy to allay the alarm of the other, but at last he plucked up a little courage when I proved to him from the reports that the losses could be completely made good by drafts of 800 men, that the whole of the 2000 had not been taken prisoner, nor had they run away, and that the greater part of the blame rested on General Lefebvre's shoulders. The fact that I had seen the Emperor only a few days previously lent my views a good deal of weight, and he at length only made it

a condition that I would discuss things with Colonel Morio on his return and try whether he would be content with so little.

I had an interview with the latter on the following morning. He was still a very young fellow, high-handed and impetuous, but at bottom a good, very well-mannered, educated man. At first he rode the high horse and the words "*un frère de l'Empereur*," which always frightened Bourgoing out of his wits, were meant to overawe me as well. But when he went on to talk about the "treachery" and the "disloyalty" of the Saxons and became a little personal, I lost my temper too and told him straight out there was no excuse for General Lefèbvre's conduct and that the Emperor would never approve it, if the King were to send me back to Finkenstein to protest. It must be a mistake that Napoleon had promised them 6000 men, for he himself had told me he did not ask for more than 1200 men, that the Prince had that number still, and that the King was not bound, in order to comply with his obligations, to send a single man. None the less, as evidence of the regard he entertained for a brother of the Emperor, he was prepared to bring the 800 men he had sent, over and above his obligations, up to strength, but wholly and solely out of consideration for Prince Jérôme, because the King did not consider himself under any obligation to make the blunders of French generals good.

He kept interrupting me with the questions, "Did you see the Emperor? Did you talk to his Majesty himself? Did his Majesty himself tell you so?" and the halo of Headquarters from which I had just returned made me a personage of importance.

He tuned his demands down at once, admitted that General Lefèbvre was not perhaps one of the most outstanding of commanders, and told me had he been lucky enough to speed up the movements of a contingent of Bavarians or Württembergers being moved up. He accepted the assurance that the 800 men would be dispatched forthwith, with thanks, and promised solemnly that the Saxons

should not, as heretofore, be bullied, but should be treated in every respect on the same footing as the French and the rest of the Allies. Bourgoing, who had joined us at last, felt greatly relieved when we came to terms and told me himself that it was the way of these young upstarts, who considered themselves superior to every one, to open their mouths too wide.

Colonel Morio, whom I met frequently later on, always struck me as a reasonable man, animated by the greatest zeal in the service of his Prince. He was shot by an assassin in 1811 as Master of Horse to the King of Westphalia.

The equipment of the 800 promised was taken in hand at once, but, pleased as the King was to get out of it at that, and strongly as Graf Bose supported me, I could not succeed in having a commander-in-chief appointed to a contingent 2000 strong. The Inspectors-General, the King told me, had made representations that detachments of this kind had always been under their command. I objected in vain that they surely could not give orders from Dresden to troops operating round Glatz and on the Bober, and that the latter, without a leader to speak for them, would be left to the tender mercies of every French or Bavarian commander.

Things remained as they were; every trifle had to be reported to Generals Zastrow and Oebischelwitz in Dresden, but before their instructions could arrive, the French had come to their decision weeks ago. Oebischelwitz and Zastrow were as a rule quite incapable of giving any instructions of any kind, but Zastrow's A.D.C., Captain Zezschwitz, fancied himself in the part of conducting operations in Silesia from his office, and what he wanted the two generals had to want too.

It was only four weeks later that an order of General Zastrow came into my hands giving Colonel Feilitzsch, commanding the cavalry on the Bober, instructions about the movements of his patrols, their strength, the spots

where he was to cross the river, post his pickets and the like, with punctilious elaboration going into the veriest detail—just such an order as might have been issued to a very junior officer doing his first field training on familiar terrain. When I laid the order, together with the map on which it was based, before him, the King was so upset by the folly of it that he gave General Zastrow orders never to intervene again in operations in which he knew nothing at all about the enemy, and, as this did no good, gave Colonel Feilitzsch instructions to make his own dispositions in accordance with circumstances and the orders of French commanders without further reference to the Inspector-General.



## V

## NAPOLEON IN DRESDEN

THE peace of Tilsit followed so fast on the heels of the battle of Friedland and Napoleon's visit to Dresden on the first tidings of it that we were hardly able to anticipate his advent by an invitation. I was sent on with it to meet the Emperor, and met him near Marienburg, but as he had engaged the post-horses everywhere, I was not able to keep ahead of him on the way back. I only reached Dresden during the night a few hours behind him. The King had gone out to meet him at Bautzen, where Napoleon's frank manner had relieved the encounter of all tension. His first words on seeing the King were, "You have not been at war with me," and turned the conversation to other topics at once. The two sovereigns drove to Dresden in a coach. When young girls in Bautzen were scattering flowers in their path, Napoleon said, "You have a fine stock in Saxony—but one ought not to talk about young girls to your Majesty."

Frederick Augustus, a past-master in the art of polite conversation, showed, whether its tone were grave or gay, to advantage here, and on this count he won Napoleon's regard, who, so I heard from Marshal Duroc, found his expectations surpassed. The King contrived to turn the conversation on the campaign in Egypt, and the Emperor, in easy, soldierly style, related one or two interesting incidents. Occasionally their talk turned on subjects of more immediate interest, on which Napoleon expressed his views in the frank, in fact reassuring, manner characteristic of him. The Emperor's main principle was to

look upon himself as a plaything of fate who in everything he had done had been compelled to do it by the pressure of circumstances.

"They do me too much honour if they believe that everything I have done was premeditated. I have seen myself forced into actions I should never have dreamed of. It is a general human weakness to assume definite plans everywhere and work some out subsequently, whereas more often chance or necessity were, in fact, the main factors; I can conceive nothing more inept than commendation for prudent calculations which were never made. If I deserve any credit it is for having seized and judged my opportunities aright."

These views fell in with the King's religious fatalism entirely, and the more he discovered a congenial acquaintance who did not take the least trouble to pose, in the dreaded bogey of Europe, the less easy it became for him not to like the man. If Napoleon had been anxious to make a lasting impression on the King, he could have chosen no better method for doing so. It was, however, by no means an assumed pose, it was his accustomed manner when he was being quite natural, when he was quite at his ease and not trying to make an impression. It was his manner of giving expression to his personality whereby he charmed everyone who came into personal contact with him. When conversation turned on conspiracies and on his danger on the occasion of the notorious infernal machine, he said, "In times of Revolution every day is a day of battle." He manifested marked personal regard for the King, admired the prosperous aspect of the country, which he called a beautiful land, and advised the King on all occasions when misunderstandings might have arisen to turn direct to him. "We shall come to an understanding after a few words without bothering either your ministers or mine about it." The King himself recounted all this to me.

On their arrival at Dresden he presented the ministers and the great officers of Court to his guest. Napoleon

thought the Minister for War had been left out, and inquired after him and asked, "Who is your Minister for War?" The King took this as a veiled reproach and answered in some embarrassment that he had not cared to make the appointment without the Emperor's approval, whereupon the latter returned the compliment by saying that his choice of his servants could never be other than judicious.

Two days later, when I chanced to be standing beside Marshal Duroc, the latter asked me to be seated with the words: "Let us have a little chat about your personal affairs. What are you now? Are you satisfied with your prospects?"

I told him I was perfectly satisfied with my position as adjutant-general.

"But you are Minister for War, aren't you?"

I said no.

"But you have got the portfolio, pending the appointment."

"Not even that."

"But the King always consults you."

"He does me the honour at times, not always."

"What do you mean? The Emperor believes that you have got the portfolio and is very pleased about it, because he knows you and wishes you well. He talked about it to the King and told me that everything was in train."

As I have no reason to doubt the good faith of the Master of the Ceremonies, I have no doubt that the Emperor really had it in his mind, but misunderstood the King's reply just as the latter failed to understand the purport of the inquiry. The incident had no sequel because I did not deem it seemly to report the conversation either to Marcolini or Bose, nor did I hanker after an appointment which I could only have obtained after an advancement without precedent in Saxony at the time, and was content with a position in which, without having the office, I could effect a good deal. In fact it had from the very first struck me as rather ignominious and self-seeking to be pushed into

office by outside intervention when I should not have been in a position to serve the King independently. I preferred to look for promotion at his hands alone, and therefore only told Baron Just what Duroc had confided to me.

Napoleon had conceived a very favourable impression of the King and was extremely attentive to the Queen and Princess Augusta; he took less notice of the other members of the Royal Family, but used to like talking to old Princess Elizabeth, and laughed heartily at the naïveté with which she often blurted out her opinions. Marcolini's behaviour was very clever; he pleaded his age and ill-health, and only appeared in the part of the King's friend and confidant who abstained from exercising any active influence. Napoleon, who was quite prepared to make allowance for certain weaknesses of habit in the King's case, took his attachment to Marcolini to be one of them, and was glad to find it centred on a man who did not obtrude himself, talked very little, but, when the Emperor addressed him, always showed tact and good sense. He already knew Graf Bose and was confirmed in the opinion he had formed of him. He was less pleased with the suite they had attached to him. They had appointed two chamberlains and an adjutant-general to attend him. The two former, Gersdorf, who had been with me in Warsaw, and Globig, who had returned from Berlin, sat in his ante-room and he took very little notice of them, but he was at a loss what to make of the latter, Colonel Brochowski. The King had summoned me to attend him immediately on my return, and I was employed on all errands to the Emperor. One morning when I was in his room with him he asked me what appointment the old man they had attached to him held. I explained he was an adjutant-general of the King.

“And you? What are you then?”

“An adjutant-general of the King too.”

“So you are a general officer.”

“No, Sire, I am only a colonel.”

“What do you mean? Then you're an adjutant-colonel.”

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As I have no reason to doubt the good faith of the Master of the Ceremonies, I have no doubt that the Emperor really had it in his mind, but misunderstood the King's reply just as the latter failed to understand the purport of the inquiry. The incident had no sequel because I did not deem it seemly to report the conversation either to Marcolini or Bose, nor did I hanker after an appointment which I could only have obtained after an advancement without precedent in Saxony at the time, and was content with a position in which, without having the office, I could effect a good deal. In fact it had from the very first struck me as rather ignominious and self-seeking to be pushed into

office by outside intervention when I should not have been in a position to serve the King independently. I preferred to look for promotion at his hands alone, and therefore only told Baron Just what Duroc had confided to me.

Napoleon had conceived a very favourable impression of the King and was extremely attentive to the Queen and Princess Augusta; he took less notice of the other members of the Royal Family, but used to like talking to old Princess Elizabeth, and laughed heartily at the naïveté with which she often blurted out her opinions. Marcolini's behaviour was very clever; he pleaded his age and ill-health, and only appeared in the part of the King's friend and confidant who abstained from exercising any active influence. Napoleon, who was quite prepared to make allowance for certain weaknesses of habit in the King's case, took his attachment to Marcolini to be one of them, and was glad to find it centred on a man who did not obtrude himself, talked very little, but, when the Emperor addressed him, always showed tact and good sense. He already knew Graf Bose and was confirmed in the opinion he had formed of him. He was less pleased with the suite they had attached to him. They had appointed two chamberlains and an adjutant-general to attend him. The two former, Gersdorf, who had been with me in Warsaw, and Globig, who had returned from Berlin, sat in his ante-room and he took very little notice of them, but he was at a loss what to make of the latter, Colonel Brochowski. The King had summoned me to attend him immediately on my return, and I was employed on all errands to the Emperor. One morning when I was in his room with him he asked me what appointment the old man they had attached to him held. I explained he was an adjutant-general of the King.

"And you? What are you then?"

"An adjutant-general of the King too."

"So you are a general officer."

"No, Sire, I am only a colonel."

"What do you mean? Then you're an adjutant-colonel!"

"In Saxony, Sire, the King's aides-de-camp are called adjutants-general (*aides-de-camp généraux*) even if they are only colonels, to distinguish them from the orderly officers (*officiers d'ordonnance*), who are called simply adjutants."

"I see. And the old man? Is he a general?"

"He is only a colonel."

"So no more than you are."

"That is so, Sire."

"Then why didn't they attach you to me, since I know you much better than the old chap, who can't keep up with me and can't answer any of my questions?"

(Brochowski was a bad horseman and had not been able to keep up with the Emperor when he went out riding.)

I replied that the King had retained me for duty, and the Emperor dismissed me after giving me an answer to the errand on which I had been sent. I considered it opportune to repeat his remarks to Baron Just, who passed them on to Marcolini. The King thereupon had me sent for and, in Marcolini's presence, asked me what the Emperor had said. I repeated it verbatim; whereupon both of them became very worried, because they quite failed to understand the position and thought that Napoleon had taken offence because they had only attached a colonel to his suite, whereas all he wanted was an able-bodied man who could attend him on his rides and give him some information in answer to his questions about the country, the buildings, and so forth. Thus, for example, that very same morning old Brochowski had dropped out at the bridge, and Coulaincourt, who spoke German fluently, had had to ask his way of the passers-by to find the cadets' school and the barracks, but had some difficulty in getting intelligent answers out of them because they mistook him for the Emperor and gaped at him open-mouthed. I told the King about this because Coulaincourt had recounted it to me, but Marcolini persisted that Napoleon wanted a general, and after a long debate whether Brochowski should not be promoted on the spot, they at last decided that the next senior, General Zezschwitz, was to report for duty. It is



PRINCESS AUGUSTA OF SAXONY

*From the painting by Joseph Stieler in the Taschenberg Palace, Dresden*





true that he was the only one of our general officers who knew a little French, but he did not talk it fluently enough by a good deal; his timid manner and tremulous meticulousness, verging on the ridiculous, fitted him least well of all they might have selected as an attendant on a man of Napoleon's activity.

Unfortunately when I reached Dresden, Colonel von Brunst had begun his week on duty as adjutant-general to the King. This worthy man was a good soldier, but conspicuous for the worn-out full-dress uniform that had never been cut to his measure and had passed down through at least six generations, knew no word of French, and liked for this very reason to pose as virulently anti-French. As he was conscious that he was not showing to advantage, he attributed his ill-humour to his dislike of everything French, and tried to carry it off by ostentatious bad temper, stiff-necked behaviour towards every member of the Emperor's suite, and incautious sarcasms against foreigners who usually understood German. The King and Marcolini were not happy about him and appreciated that he was out of place on this occasion; consequently I had to come on duty out of my turn, but in spite of that Brunst was nominally on duty and as such in attendance on the King.

In Dresden it did not matter much because all he had to do was to walk behind, but it was all the more awkward at the meet arranged at Moritzburg. Brunst had, greatly against his inclination, to be included, and so Marcolini had no mount left for me. When the chase started the King had not a soul near him who knew a word of French except the page of the chase, Schleinitz, who also affected Francophobia and kept out of the way among the beaters. No one had explained the rules of the hunt in the Park to Napoleon, or that the course the quarry would take was laid down and could therefore be followed in comfort along the usual rides, and he therefore followed hard on the hounds, and the King could not keep up with him, so he was finally left alone without any Saxon attendance except the page of the chase, Feilitzsch, who, as ill luck would

have it, knew no French, in the company of Coulaincourt and another Frenchman. The King was very conscious of all these lapses but he did nothing to forestall them.

He himself submitted to every inconvenience which the dislocation of his usual routine of life entailed with a good grace, but every effort to give our Court some semblance of style came to grief on Marcolini's cheeseparings, lack of good taste, and indolence. However annoyed the King might be quietly, and in the end he made no secret of his annoyance, whatever trouble Graf Bose might take to expend the big sums the visit was costing us with some regard to propriety and dignity, it was all of no avail. Everything we did or spent was, thanks to Marcolini's intervention, hall-marked by the impress of a thrifty provincialism, and it proved impossible to stir him out of his indolent indifference, to instil some sense of the significance of the occasion into him. He seemed to have no conception that things might have been organized on very different lines and to far better advantage. That was how things had been done for ever so long, and consequently how they would have to go on being done, even now on such an exceptional occasion as the present. If representations were made to him, his answer invariably was: "That won't do; have always made all arrangements on these lines," and that is what the upshot was.

It would be easy to write volumes on all the gaucheries we perpetrated within the period of these few days; I will only give a few examples. The King had asked me about the hours the Emperor kept, with a view to making his own arrangements fit in with them, and Duroc and Coulaincourt had given me definite information about them. Napoleon breakfasted in his own room after ten o'clock, usually only in the company of Prince Jérôme or of the Grand Duke of Berg and the Prince of Neuchâtel. During breakfast he received the reports of the officers of his Household and the complimentary inquiries of the Royal Family, afterwards he gave audience or worked as he had done in the earlier hours of the morning, when he occu-

sionally went for a ride. Before dinner at 6 p.m. he would pay a visit to the Royal Family and they to him; a Court was held, and in the evening usually a ladies' reception, cards or music. Excursions to Moritzburg or Pillnitz, drives, visits to inspect the sights, or the picture galleries, for example, varied the routine. At nine o'clock every morning his chamberlain, Tournon, came to the King's wardrobe to inquire the programme of the day, and during breakfast Napoleon sent his compliments to the King and the rest of the members of the Royal Family.

Marcolini was quite unable to adapt himself to this timetable. I always had to be in the wardrobe before 6 a.m. to deliver the King's commissions, which always included the customary morning's complimentary messages. Marcolini came about eight o'clock, and was always upset if I had not been to Napoleon. Although I explained to him in the King's presence that I should not be received before breakfast, he insisted that I ought to go round at once. It was, of course, a bootless errand, but he refused to be taught. "I have already asked the Mameluke if the Emperor has risen; one ought to inquire how he has slept."

The following morning he dispatched the Marshal of the Court, Tümpling; the latter was announced without stating his errand, was admitted and found the Emperor hard at work and very surprised at being interrupted at such an early hour; the next morning he was not admitted and I again transmitted the usual courtesies during breakfast, when Napoleon usually chatted to me for a few minutes. The chief steward Dziembrowski, who discharged the same errand on behalf of the Queen, thenceforward always came with me at the same hour. This man was a real prototype of a Saxon courtier. Clad in old-fashioned and shabby, even dirty attire, cringing and at the same time aggressively arrogant and, after he had been converted to the Roman Catholic faith, professing the most servile type of devotionism, he none the less gave himself airs on the strength of his appointment; although his pretensions

were only based on the fact that the Queen, on every occasion, treated him with contempt. Without education or any knowledge, he gave himself away in every conversation and, stuffed with stupid self-conceit, had vainly imagined he could hold the scales to Marcolini. The latter, who knew his man, gave him plenty of rope, rolled him deep in the mud, and then made use of him as an underpaid scout. He was now only trying to maintain his position by means of the clergy, overloaded himself with a mass of devotional exercises and vows, to the Divine Heart, for example, to the Holy Vestment and so forth, which the clergy treated as so many speculations in which you invest only to draw preferential dividends in heaven, and more than once have I seen him, chancing upon Pater Schneider—in the wardrobe, in the corridors or elsewhere—rushing at him and imprinting a resounding kiss on his hand. It was from people of this type that the higher officers of our Court were recruited; it was they who came in contact with foreigners as persons of distinction, and for years our Court was judged by the standard they represented.

Although Marcolini had accommodated himself to the change in the times of meals in Dresden, he failed to adapt himself to them in the case of an excursion into the country. If the King drove out to Pillnitz or Moritzburg, as he only did during the winter season, he took coach about midday to sit down to dinner at one o'clock. Dinner was now never served before six o'clock, but none the less the company was expected, since it had become a tradition, to leave Dresden at noon, in the broiling heat of July. The King had probably protested against this without succeeding in convincing Marcolini; he ordered me to inquire what hour would be convenient to the Emperor. At breakfast Napoleon himself broached the subject by remarking, "At what time do we start?"

Dziembrowski anticipated me by saying they always left Dresden about midday, and that Marcolini had made the same arrangements for to-day.

“What!” cried the Emperor. “At midday? And in this heat? How long does it take to get there?” he added, turning to me. I told him it did not take more than an hour and that the King had instructed me to inquire at what hour he proposed to set out.

“Well,” he said, “that’s a matter for the ladies, more particularly for her Majesty, to decide. But I can’t imagine it will suit her Majesty to take coach in this heat.”

Dziembrowski assured him she was accustomed to it. The Emperor looked at me and said, “Isn’t she rather delicate?” and I replied, she often complained about the heat, but that she would be glad to accommodate herself to any hour convenient to the Emperor.

“Ah,” he said, “she’s accustomed to it, is she? Would it be convenient to her to start at five o’clock?” Dziembrowski was sent off to the Queen with this suggestion. When he had gone, Napoleon smiled and said softly, “I can well believe that she has more natural heat in her than old Marcolini. We should waste the whole day for the fun of being broiled in the sun—I can get through a lot of work before that.”

Marcolini was very upset when I brought this news; he grumbled that he had made all arrangements, had given orders to the master of the stables to have the coaches ready by twelve o’clock, and now everything would have to be changed. The King, on the contrary, was very pleased and asked me, when we were alone, what the Emperor had said, and when I repeated his “I can get through a lot of work before then,” he was relieved in his turn to be able to devote so many hours to work.

As a Sunday fell within the term of the visit they had arranged for a choral Mass to begin at a quarter to twelve. But by ten o’clock the King, with his sword by his side and his hat under his arm, was standing ready with his assembled suite to receive the Emperor. I was sent off to report that everything was in readiness. The King, it is true, thought Napoleon would only wish to attend Mass, but Marcolini, who normally exempted himself from

attendance, did not like to have turned out to no purpose on this occasion. I therefore had to accept the errand, but I varied it, when the Emperor himself had me admitted, by only inquiring whether he proposed to attend the service from the beginning or only choral Mass.

"And the King? At what time does he go to church?"

"He usually goes about half-past ten, in time for the sermon, but it's another hour before Mass begins."

"And does he stay in church the whole time?"

"Yes."

"They do a lot of churchgoing in this country. So far as I am concerned I confine myself to hearing Mass on Sundays and festivals. Tell his Majesty that I shall not miss Mass, but that I should not be able to follow the sermon because it will be preached in German. Let me know when it is time to start."

I put these incidents on record because at this time, and more especially later on, after Napoleon's fall, any number of fictitious stories were current that he had interfered discourteously with the traditional customs of the Saxon Court, had had his own kitchen, had allowed it to be served only by his own household. All this is absolutely untrue. Both his breakfast and his midday meal were served from the Royal kitchens and Saxon servitors waited on him. It was only on these two occasions that he took the liberty with, as is evident, the greatest courtesy, of modifying Marcolini's arrangements. No one is in a position to know that more positively than I, because all these arrangements passed through my hands.

After the Emperor's breakfast, a breakfast was always served in the Royal ante-rooms for every member of Napoleon's and the King's suites in attendance. Coulin-court, Duroc, Marshal Bessières, the chamberlain Tournon, the prefect of the palace, Beausset, the Emperor's military master of the horse, La Velotière, and Bongarts breakfasted together with the Saxon marshals of the Court, the chamberlains and the adjutants on duty.

The master of the kitchens, Rachnitz, as doyen of the

marshals, was supposed to do the honours, but no one could have been less well suited for the appointment than this man, who had for a long time enjoyed the reputation in Saxony of a Mæcenæ of art and had made a name for himself in the architectural world by his work on "Tastes," as the well-known Xenia called it. He was a man of some talent; that is to say, he was able to sketch a little, play the lute a little, do a lot of mechanical tricks and chemical experiments at ladies' parties, trifle with collections of minerals, and had learnt quite a great deal of art jargon by heart. But above all else he had the gift of picking other people's brains by flattering them, and at the same time, first as "maître de plaisir" and custodian of the art collections, and subsequently as Marshal of the Household and Custodian of Buildings, held the future of Saxon artists in the hollow of his hand. He owed his reputation as a naturalist to Inspector Köhler and one or two other scholars, and as a critic of note to that fine decorative artist, Schnaich, and the scholarly antiquarian, Böttiger. He disguised his own ineptitude behind an assumption of absent-mindedness, which in course of time had become a second nature and served as an excuse for every blunder, however ridiculous. With these qualities he combined an obnoxiously cynical manner, so that no one cared to have much to do with him, more especially to sit next him at table.

This was the man Marcolini had made Master of the Household, and it went to pieces entirely under him. If anything, even the commonest necessities, ran short, people used to say: Rachnitz has overlooked it again, he is so absent-minded that he forgets everything; and Marcolini found the man he had been looking for in him, a Master of the Household in office who signed all the household accounts and, if a mistake should occur, could always fall back on his absent-mindedness. The cost of the Royal kitchens, apart from the wages of the staff, apart from game, fish, butcher's meat and poultry, apart from



butter, eggs and garden produce, which were purveyed on separate accounts, amounted none the less to 1000 talers a week and were bad at that. It was only during the summer that the Princes were the King's guests at Pillnitz; during the whole of the winter they had their separate establishments in Dresden, and only on Sundays, and at most once a week, there was a dinner of sixteen to twenty covers, at which the officers of the Court on duty were entertained. For the rest of the week they were free to dine as best suited their purses. The surplus of this amount, expended on practically nothing at all, flowed into the pockets of Marcolini, the Master of the Household, and unnumbered hordes of cellar-men, master cooks, kitchen clerks, cooks, scullions, lackeys, in short, of what is known as the *valetaille*, all of whom Marcolini allowed to steal so openly that they, even when the King was travelling, received compensation in cash for the loss of these perquisites, "pour le snurb," as Marcolini called it in adaptation of the vulgar word "Schurbs."

A regime of this kind, monstrous as it really was, by force of habit gave no rise to comment as long as everything took its wonted course, but the more lamentable its shortcomings became when its routine was interrupted by any event outside of the usual round. As every one followed the lead of the bell-wether, the great manager of the Saxon Court, like sheep, a certain degree of orderliness was evolved rather after the fashion of a Russian brass band, every member of which is trained to sound a single note. But everything was chaos as soon as more than the accustomed performance was required, and Marcolini, who in the end would have been glad to assist, was unable to get any results out of the tools he himself had chosen. He gave it up and allowed things to take what course they would or could, and was only concerned to pocket as much as possible for his own account.

Rachnitz did nothing at all; he was too accustomed to pass off everything, all trouble, on the score of his absent-mindedness. He did not regard attentiveness towards his

guests as falling within his duties as a host. On the very first day he had forgotten to send out invitations either to the foreign or the native guests. When the meal was served he took his seat with Colonel Brunst, Marshal Tümping and the two chamberlains of the King and Queen, and was surprised that no one else turned up. Then he sent some one, to me first of all, to inquire whether we were not coming to breakfast and, as I had heard no more about it than the foreigners, on to the latter. One or two turned up, the others had made shift with a cup of chocolate and begged to be excused. Rachnitz was not in the least embarrassed, went on with his meal, and only when he had finished begged me to be sure to bring the gentlemen with me to breakfast every day.

It never occurred to him that there was any obligation on his part to invite them. In fact, so little was it the fashion at the Saxon Court to trouble about strangers that Marcolini had selected two men as chamberlains on duty for that particular week neither of whom spoke a word of French. One of them was Herr von Gersdorf, of the Upper Lausitz, a very agreeable man, by the way, the other a Herr von Tümping, a thoroughly vulgar person who was one of Marcolini's scouts, and notorious for his uncouthness and for the fact that he usually prefaced his remarks by "I am only a stupid devil, but . . ." He wanted to conciliate the one and to reward the other by putting them in the way of a present from the Emperor. Marcolini did not share the view that the distinction of a Court lies in the refinement and good manners of its courtiers, and the King was so accustomed to having only uneducated squires or pompous provincials in attendance on him that he had long ago given up looking for more refined qualities and better manners from members of his Court. We did not, however, even on the roll of chamberlains, lack men of the standard of Graf Bürnau and others, but they were reputed to be Francophobes, although they were only really sick of the Court that snubbed them because they refused to bend an obsequious knee to Marcolini.

As his choice on these occasions only fell on such persons to whom he wanted to show some favour and did not take their personalities into account, a curiously assorted company assembled for breakfast, and they were the more conspicuous because they came into closer view than at Court, and it therefore was not so easy to lose sight of them as at Court functions. Our Saxon Court furnished a strong contrast to the modish, cultured Frenchmen, and the service at the breakfast table, too, did our hospitality little credit. There were, it is true, plenty of dishes; but they were badly served, and as, according to traditional custom, the staff removed the dishes from the table to carve them at a side table, and to bring every guest his portion on a plate, you only got what they thought fit to apportion to you and the best dishes were carried off, as if they were purely decorative dummies, untouched under your very eyes, or exchanged for inferior ones. This, too, is what always happened at Pillnitz with amazing effrontery under the nose of Marshals of the Court themselves who did not protest. In return the carvers made an exception in their favour, but the other guests were entirely dependent on the good will of the kitchen staff.

To add insult to injury, the wine was hardly drinkable. I noticed with annoyance how the foreigners, when once they had tasted it, never touched it again. One day English ale was served. Coulaincourt took a glass, and after he had tasted it, asked for another, but the butler told him there was no more left. I scribbled a note of what I had seen on a bill of fare and sent it to Rachnitz, who was sitting beside Coulaincourt opposite me, but never heard or saw anything of what was going on about him. He leapt to his feet, opened his mouth, beckoned to the butler and sent me word that it was the last bottle left and they would have to send round to an Italian (? grocer). It took some time; at last another bottle came to hand and a glass was served to the Duke of Vicenza, who put it down as soon as he had raised it to his lips. As a matter of curiosity I told them to bring me a glass, but could not

drink it because it had gone quite sour. Things could not have been done more parsimoniously at a suburban lodging-house, and that at a table which was costing the King thousands.

The Prince of Benevent had hinted to me in Warsaw that the French were suffering a little from the "decoration mania," and as the King would probably institute an order to celebrate the occasion, he advised him to do it at once, to invite the Emperor's acceptance of it, and he would take it as a compliment if the King expressed a wish for the cordon of the Legion of Honour. We should then have an inexpensive means of putting some of the members of the Emperor's suite under an obligation to us, more especially if the King did not make his order cheap by conferring it too liberally. I reported this to Dresden at once, but although it fell in with the King's wishes—the statutes of the Order had already been drafted—and Graf Bose supported the suggestion, they could not make up their minds to do anything.

When I returned in April, Talleyrand reminded me of it, and I urged Graf Bose to take some action. The King himself discussed it with me, but his trouble was that the Prince of Benevent had only given me the hint verbally, not officially nor in writing. We were simply incapable of doing anything unless we had orders. I therefore suggested to Graf Bose that it might be well to write to Talleyrand on the matter, and as soon as his answer came to hand, the ribbons, stars and crosses were turned out in hot haste. Grand Crosses of the Rautenkrone and of the Heinrichsorden were instituted.

One morning I found the King wearing the green ribbon, and he instructed me to have him announced to Napoleon. Napoleon sent me a very cordial answer and I went to fetch the King, who gave me a little packet of ribbons to carry. He went into the inner room with the Emperor, who had come out into the antechamber to meet him, and told him he had decided to celebrate the event by insti-

tuting the new Order of the Rautenkrone, and he begged the Emperor to honour it by becoming its first commander, and he himself would feel greatly flattered by being privileged to wear the ribbon of the Legion in return. Napoleon took the compliment in the most cordial manner, and the King opened the door for me to hand him the ribbon, but the Emperor had by this time taken off his own ribbon and invested the King with his own hands and asked him for the ribbon he himself was wearing. As they got into difficulties in fastening it, no one else was at hand and I was standing in the open doorway, I had the honour of playing valet to both of them.

When they came out into the ante-room side by side, they made rather a quaint sight, for the King's long green ribbon fell almost to the Emperor's knees, while Frederick Augustus was wearing Napoleon's red band across his chest like a bandolier.

With the latter's assent, the Prince of Benevent and the Dukes of Friaul and Vicenza, as well as Prince Jérôme, were invested with the green ribbon. The same day, Prince Anton and Prince Maximilian wore it as a Household order, and the King conferred it on Marcolini and Count Bose, and a few days later on several others.

The King had told me that he was going to confer the orders, but had not mentioned the persons who were to receive them, and I saw plainly that Marshal Bessières (Duke of Istria), a favourite of Napoleon, and one of the most upright men of his Court, was offended at being passed over. I took the liberty of calling the King's attention to this when I went in to him as usual at one o'clock.

"You are quite right," he answered, "but I have nothing but bad luck with this new Order. Just imagine, the Grand Duke of Berg has been overlooked. No one reminded me of him. It is too late now that I have omitted to include him in the first investiture. It would look now as if it were an afterthought."

He was so put out that he stamped his foot.

“This precious Graf Marcolini thinks he has made all arrangements and hasn’t even got a single Order to spare.”

It fortunately occurred to me that no Grand Cross of the Heinrich Order had yet been conferred, and that this as a military decoration would be appropriate in the case of Bessières and Murat, and could be sent on to the Duke of Neufchâtel, who was absent. The King was delighted with this way out of his dilemma. He sent for Marcolini on the spot, and everything was put into train to everyone’s satisfaction; and on this occasion Marcolini did not resent my intervention, as he otherwise would have done, because it cloaked a blunder of his own making.

He quite failed to appreciate too that the Emperor’s suite was far above his own status in rank, that it included a reigning sovereign—and he had coolly overlooked the Grand Duke of Berg. He broke down, so he believed, under the pressure of work, and yet would not allow anyone else to relieve him of some of it. He looked on the foreign Court as an overwhelming burden, but three of them, after Jérôme had arrived, was too much of a good thing.

The Grand Duke, who was lodged at the Cosel Palace, was therefore almost overlooked. Instead of appointing a smart officer to attend him, they had sent a groom of the chamber, and had made an extremely ill-judged choice in Herr von Einsiedel, a very shy young man. Educated in the pages’ College and promoted to Groom of the Chamber, he had never been outside Dresden, and his purview was confined to Pillnitz, the Dresden Palace, the churches and a few coffee-houses. He was suffering too from the misfortune that his neck was awry, for he carried his head over one shoulder, and his appearance was not made more prepossessing by his dress. He always wore a plain dark brown frock-coat with coloured buttons, which, as luck would have it, looked as if it had been cut from the same piece of cloth as that of the clerk of the kitchens in charge of the service of the Grand Duke’s breakfast. The latter, of course, assumed his Groom of the Chamber to be another

member of the service staff and took very little notice of him. But he was much too good-humoured to take this neglect in bad part, and received me most cordially when early in the morning I presented the King's compliments.

One of Marcolini's cheeseparings was that, while his son was driving about everywhere in Court coaches and with liveried attendants, he was always loth to retain a page for the necessary errands in the town. As far as I was concerned, I should have been quite content to take a hackney coach, but owing to the number of visitors in Dresden, there was not one to be had, and I executed most of the King's commissions on foot.

But on one occasion when I had to transact some business in Neustadt with the Emperor's aide-de-camp, General Bertrand, who is with him in St. Helena to-day, and it involved a long wrangle with Marcolini, to the King's annoyance, before I could get a coach, I contrived to get his orders that two harnessed coaches were always to be in waiting in the courtyard. Marcolini, however, succeeded in modifying this order in so far that I had to give notice to the stables every morning whether these coaches would be required. I took good care they were.

One day on my way to the stables at six o'clock in the morning for this purpose, I met the Clerk of the Kitchens attached to the Grand Duke's household in a state of great agitation, and he told me he had been running about for an hour to find some one who knew the way to Maxen, whither Prince Murat proposed to ride to view the battle-field. He had not announced his intention till nine o'clock on the previous evening, and by that time Marcolini had gone to bed and could not be disturbed, and he was not up yet. The Grand Duke had therefore asked Prince Jérôme for the loan of the horses, but was still without a guide, and had sent to the post for the loan of a postboy.

I gave the clerk a dressing down for running about, hat in hand, to find a guide and for not coming straight to me the previous evening, and hurried to the Cosel Palace, where

Murat was in the courtyard in the act of mounting his horse. I begged him to have a minute's patience, put all the blame on the shoulders of the clerk, whom I had sent on with orders to have Marcolini wakened, and promised that an officer would report for escort duty. Murat saw my embarrassment and good-humouredly made light of the whole incident, but preferred to go on and asked me to send the officer after him. I then rushed to Marcolini, who was just out of bed and would not hear of mounting an officer on one of the hunters.

"They ought to have given me notice of it at the proper time," he said placidly; "should have sent relays, but it can't be done to-day. He'd ride one of my horses to rags, that officer of yours. He rides like hell, the Grand Duke. Have given orders about everything with regard to the stables to Trützscher. Ought to have applied to him yesterday."

This individual was head forest officer in Grillenburg whom Marcolini had sent for as one of his protégés and put in charge of the stables to earn his present. He did not know a word of French and did nothing beyond gorging himself every morning at breakfast, then "strolled on the bridge" to keep an eye on the palace, and if nothing happened by one o'clock, spent the rest of the day in some low pothouse. Marcolini had, furthermore, not told a soul about his functions, and no one knew why he had his seat at table with the rest of us.

All I could wring out of Marcolini was an undertaking that he would dispatch a groom to show the Grand Duke the way. I then went to General Cerrini, whom they had appointed, because the old governor was entirely incompetent, to an office that, in fact, superseded the governorship of Dresden and was nominally controlled by him, but for practical purposes by Hauptmann Vieth. I hoped to pick up an officer here, but Vieth, as bad luck would have it, was away, and Cerrini was as little disposed to be obliging as Marcolini had been. He had no one to send, he said, and what officer would care to go chasing about the open



country? All protests remained fruitless until a young officer who happened to be there volunteered to ride after the Grand Duke. But he was too badly mounted to catch him up. Murat had found a peasant who showed him the battle-field, and on the way back he met the groom, who got a gold watch for his pains.

When I recounted this experience to the King he was very annoyed. "In cases such as this they ought not to dilly-dally," he said, and was particularly exasperated by Cerrini's inertia. But that was all that came of it.

Before the day fixed for the meet at Moritzburg, I had not been able to find a minute's time to call on Talleyrand and Besnadière. Both gave me a very cordial reception. Talleyrand told me the Emperor was at the moment very busy in allocating the territories surrendered to him under the Peace of Tilsit. . . .

Talleyrand took occasion (von Funck's account of it is rather long-winded) to remind him that he had not yet received an answer to a hint he had dropped that Saxony might have claim for compensation for certain snippets of territory it had lost under the Treaty.

"I should be glad," he added with meaning, "to take this opportunity of showing the King how devoted I am to him. It is perhaps the last occasion on which I shall be in a position to be of service to his Majesty."

Funck immediately hurried to Count Bosc, who was too ill to attend to business promptly; then to the King, who was as usual shocked that the suggestion had not reached him through "the proper channels." While they were hunting for these channels, the occasion passed, and Saxony again as usual got nothing. But these stories become monotonous by reason of their constant repetition. We resume the chronicle of the small beer of Napoleon's visit.

Attached as the King was to his nephew, Prince Friedrich, he had not plucked up courage to present him to the Emperor because the latter had omitted to inquire for him. Seeing that he was very upset about it I took an opportunity of mentioning it to Duroc, the Master of Ceremonies, who promised me to remind the Emperor of it. I kept quiet about the steps I had taken for fear of complications. One afternoon, or rather a few hours after breakfast, Duroc came beaming from the Emperor's study.

"The Emperor has been asking after the children," he said. "He would like to see them."

I asked when.

"At once, if possible. You know yourself one has to take advantage of the propitious moment."

I hurried back at once to the King, who was fluttered and gratified by my news. But as he thought it was Napoleon's own sudden idea he had no time for second thoughts, and a few minutes later I met Prince Maximilian in the gallery taking his seven children to see the Emperor. On his return he was overjoyed by their pleasant reception, and squeezed my hand with tears in his eyes. I do not know whether Napoleon had mentioned my name, but he thanked me, and right up to the present day has given me proof of his good will and gratitude.

On Napoleon's departure I was in attendance on him as far as Erfurt, where he dismissed me very cordially with a graceful message to the King and the Royal Family, and laughed heartily when he drove away. Rustan, his Mameluke, jumped down from the box again to thank me for our handsome hospitality, for, badly as we had entertained our distinguished guests, the more liberal and lavish had been the provision made for the domestic staff and the lower grades of the Imperial household.

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PART III  
THE POLISH INTERLUDE



## I

### A HAZARDOUS EXPERIMENT

ONE of the worst political mistakes Napoleon ever made was the incorporation of the duchy of Warsaw with Saxony under the sceptre of Frederick Augustus. He himself admits in his memoirs from St. Helena that he did not make the use of the Poles he might have done, and had only taken half-measures in their affairs : it would be more correct to say that he had only half made up his mind and therefore took nothing but ill-judged measures.

Although I had spent a good deal of the first four months of 1807 in Talleyrand's entourage, and had even reached a certain stage of intimacy with them, more especially with La Besnadière, I should not care to assert definitely that Talleyrand opposed this union, though I have every reason for suspecting it. He was always aloof and reserved on this point; he dropped some hints that he would be glad to see the Princess Augusta married to some one who would make it impossible to announce her as heiress apparent to Poland. He proposed the Prince of Bavaria, who had just renounced an alliance with a Grand Duchess and therefore had some claim to look for Napoleon's assent to another choice.

When on May 1st the Poles illuminated Warsaw and put up a transparency to the Constitution of 1791, Talleyrand insisted on its being removed. His policy in general was to bolster up Prussia against Russia, but to head it away from the Rhine and to make the Weser its western border. But nothing of the kind was effected by the Peace of Tilsit.





# I

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Napoleon's attempt to win over the Queen through old Kalkenreuth for this scheme came to grief on Luise's preference for Russia and aversion from all things French, which she masked under a passive devotion to her husband that made her abstain from all interference. In a private interview she could not avoid, she always countered Napoleon's suasion by her wifely duty until he broke it off with the remark, "While I honour these sentiments of a wife, you are at the same time a Queen and a mother."

If she had adhered less rigidly to her prejudices, Prussia might not have attained the present-day semblance of greatness, but it would rest on a sounder foundation of security and have saved the world a good deal of upheaval.

Napoleon then fell back on his initial policy towards Poland, but, either because he was preoccupied by other schemes or was genuinely attuned to magnanimity—always inopportune in high politics—by his delight at his success, only half-heartedly. Prussia, reluctant to accept anything at his hands, bore him no thanks for what he conceded to it when he could have taken it, and only hated him the more rancorously for what it lost. If, in view of the King's stubborn character and the humbled pride of the nation, it was not to be reconciled by magnanimity, he had to humiliate it deeper still, strip it of Silesia and embroil it with Russia by allowing Alexander to extend his borders to the Pregel.

Napoleon had got to know the Poles in his Italian wars and to value them for fine soldiers. France's natural interests prompted him to take them in charge. By the restoration of Poland he expiated the biggest political crime of the eighteenth century. His honour made it incumbent on him to bring a mangled, maltreated nation, despoiled of its language and its name, back into being. But at that time it was not within his power to reunite the whole of Poland under one sceptre; he could not compel either Russia or Austria to disgorge the stolen provinces. But the latter longed for union in their common fatherland; those, at any rate, forced under foreign suzerainty in 1794 were prepared

to rise against their oppressors. It was for the moment a question of forming a nucleus and ensuring its security. Poland, with French support, would have reconquered itself. But for this purpose the nucleus required a constitution suited to the national character and a strong regent.

Funck runs through the list of possible candidates. Any descendant of Catherine the Great would inevitably have treated Poland as a Russian province. There was no one with the qualities of a man available among the Prussian princes nor among the Austrian Archdukes. Napoleon ruled out a Frenchman, he believes, because he thought Jérôme unequal to the task and to assist another Marshal to found a dynasty might in the case of Poland have been "a hazardous experiment." Funck's own choice would have been Bernadotte, though he believed the Poles would have idolized Murat.

Napoleon thought he was consulting the Poles' own wishes when his choice fell on the King of Saxony. They had shown their attachment to the Saxon House in the revolution of 1791. "Under the Saxon kings the Pole loosens his belt" was still a popular proverb. But what he overlooked was that these traditions were purely dynastic and did not appeal to the Saxon people, who looked on Poland only as another source of expense. "Every taler the country was costing the King was blackmail on Saxony." The Poles, on the other hand, took offence at the bad grace with which the Saxons accepted the honour they offered their King. In temperament and in outlook the peoples themselves were too far apart. Bad stage management (and, of course, Marcolini) contributed to accentuate their antagonism.

Unfortunately, nothing we did was calculated to give

them (the Poles) a favourable impression of the new regime. Our demeanour in itself was bound to offend a people who attach so much importance to externals as the Poles. As usual no preparations had been made and we were, when confronted with the situation, as flabbergasted as if it were entirely unexpected.

The delegates of the Government Commission in Warsaw arrived in Dresden close on the Emperor's heels. They were to submit the wishes of the Poles and their resolution to entrust the government of their country to the King in a formal audience. Propriety demanded that the occasion should be invested with some measure of appropriate state, but for this purpose some one other than Marcolini should have been in charge of the arrangements. After his usual custom he had not told a soul about it. No minister had been notified, the highest officers of the Court had not had an inkling, not even the officers on duty for the day had had a hint.

One morning the Court usher, reading out the orders for the day, announced amongst other things that the Polish nobles would be received in audience. It was the rule for either the adjutant or the chamberlain to conduct the visitor into the presence chamber, to announce him to the King, and then to withdraw; so every one assumed that that would be the procedure followed that day. I therefore only asked who was going to introduce the visitors; the usher did not know. So I went to look for the Master of the Ceremonies, but found Marcolini in the Wardrobe and asked him.

"Ah," said he, "*j'ai oublié de vous dire, n'est pas ceci une audience particulière, restez avec moi. Vous verrez, arrangerai tout moi-même.*"

A few minutes later the King entered the audience chamber, and took up his stand, not as usual, in front of the mantelpiece, but under the baldachin. No one except Marcolini and myself were in the room, and the King asked where the others were.

I offered to go and look for them, and the King added :

"Bring any one you come across."

But I could not find any one in the antechamber except the adjutant actually on duty and the two chamberlains. I brought them in with me, and Marcolini beckoned to them to dispose themselves round the throne, but they failed to understand what was wanted of them and remained in a huddled cluster.

By this time the arrival of the delegates, who were presented by Graf Bose, was announced.

Instead of finding the King surrounded by his ministers, generals, and officers of his Court, they had to pick him out standing in front of the throne in the big chamber, with a rather huddled group of three individuals in the background. All the display was on the part of the delegates; meagreness and embarrassment on ours. Stanislaus Potocki read the address in French, and the King responded in the same language, and his gift of expressing himself clearly, distinctly, and with dignity made amends for the mistakes committed against decorum. The Poles at any rate saw that he personally did not lack it, but was ill served by his courtiers, who did not know their business.

After the Emperor had left the King began to work very hard at the affairs of his new realm.

Brzeze, the Secretary of State, came to Dresden to instruct him about the budget and the finances. The King, who was busy enough with the restoration of Saxony's credit, had to break into his hours of recreation and sleep to inform himself of everything relating to the Duchy of Warsaw and personally read the mass of petitions with which political reformers, who were cropping up everywhere, and members of the nobility on their private affairs flooded him. At the same time he was with a good deal of effort studying the Polish language, which he had learnt as a young man but had never spoken and in which he had had no practice for forty years, but reached a state of proficiency by November, when he could express himself slowly, it is true, but distinctly elegantly, and—what

is far more difficult—with grammatical correctness in Polish.

Up to the time of the first journey to Warsaw towards the end of 1807 he had a very good excuse for not intervening, for leaving the administration in the hands of the provisional government, and for postponing everything until his arrival and actual assumption of sovereignty. He had first of all to gather accurate information and to see things with his own eyes. His intuitive grasp of things astonished the Poles. In an interval of four months he had acquired such a thorough theoretic knowledge of the country, of its then conditions, of its deeply ingrained evils and of those only due to the stress of the times, of its exploited or unexploited natural resources and the like, that ministers on discussing a matter within their department often found him to be better informed on its conditions and particulars than they themselves were. At first this made a great impression upon them, but they soon became acquainted with his limitation of never envisaging things through his own eyes, but of subordinating his judgment to theirs, so that by some ingeniously adopted pretext they were always able to lead him by the nose.

The first visit to Warsaw, from the middle of November to Christmastide, was too short to do much. The King confined himself almost entirely to confirming in general terms all measures taken, to instituting the ministry and the Council of State to be, and on his part to accepting the Constitution formally. The Army Corps of Marshals Soult and Davout were still in Poland; the former, to which the Saxon troops were attached, was withdrawing, the latter remained under Davout, who had the Polish army, improvised in all haste, under his command. What were known as the Polish brigades in French service were stationed partly in Italy, partly in the Polish or Prussian provinces. The state of war had not been entirely suspended, and consequently the Marshal as General Officer commanding the army of occupation still overlapped with the Government.

Truth compels me to admit that Davout behaved with great moderation, with all possible consideration for the country and with remarkable tact and respect towards the King. I have, in fact, convincing evidence that he meant us well and was full of regard both for the King and favourably disposed towards the Polish nation. He sincerely wished both parties well and did his best to further their interests.

Davout had no other will than the Emperor's. Any one he regarded as a friend of Napoleon could count on his support, any one he believed to be antagonistic to the Emperor he eyed with ever-watchful distrust. He would have sent his own brother to the scaffold at a nod from Napoleon, but any one who had been commended to him by Napoleon could count on his whole-hearted support.

He himself told me more than once that the Emperor had enjoined the greatest regard for Frederick Augustus on him, in fact he showed me one day a postscript to a letter from Napoleon in which the latter had added in his own almost illegible handwriting: "*Je vous recommande de faire tout ce que pourra être utile ou agréable au Roi de Saxe, car c'est un des Souverains que j'aime et que j'estime le plus.*" Yet in spite of all the trouble he took to win the King's good graces he never even partially succeeded in gaining his confidence. Frederick Augustus respected and admired him, as at that time he undoubtedly deserved to be, but he could never rid himself of a certain constraint which the uncertainty of what attitude to adopt towards the Marshal imposed on him. He would without hesitation have taken his orders from him, in fact he did so on every occasion when he thought the Marshal wanted a matter treated in this way or the other, and this to the verge of servility; but he could never strike the right note towards a man who seemed to be standing on the neutral ground between a sovereign and a subject. With the exception of Graf Bose and myself, every one about the King, from his consort to his valet, hated the Marshal for no other reason than the fact that he was a soldier of uncertain ancestry and



that the prestige of a Court appointment which Marcolini had exalted above every other in Saxony was aspersed by him and his very existence.

The Queen, who was in reality attracted by the military profession, was incited by her women of the bedchamber, because the lower grades of the Court personnel attributed the interference with their comfort, snugly ensconced in the clock-work routine of the Marcolini regime, in the first instance to the Marshal and in the second the Poles in general.

The clergy were annoyed when the King was prevented from keeping one of his devotional appointments, and the courtiers noted resentfully that Davout's aides-de-camp did not bow as low to a Saxon chamberlain as the adjutants of an Inspector-General or a Saxon staff officer did in Dresden. They all tried to make the King adopt an attitude of condescension towards the Marshal, and, as they failed here, sought every opportunity of demonstrating their impotent ill-will by petty discourtesies.

It was a *misfortune* that Marcolini, who never ceased to rule the inner counsels of the Court from Dresden, prescribed procedure, and insisted on being consulted on every detail, and interfered with everything, and shirked attendance on the King because he was afraid of the discomforts of the journey and the number of the troops in movement. If he had been on the spot, the King would soon have recovered his poise, which for fear of offending his old mentor made it difficult for him to do, and Marcolini, misled by ignorance of local conditions and circumstances and by biased reports, would with his own eyes—which he was quite capable of using to good purpose—have seen the state of things as it was, and not have issued entirely inappropriate orders from afar. Because we had never yet conceived any form of ceremonial as possible other than that which by dint of habit had become law, and yet were resolved to adapt ourselves to the ceremonial of the Emperor's military court, the most ridiculous misapprehensions ensued.

One word would have been enough to clear up these misunderstandings, but no one dared to utter it because it might have been taken for opposition; we preferred to subordinate ourselves passively and servilely, and achieved precisely the opposite effect to the one we intended because we had misinterpreted the point of view of the other side. But all this gave great offence to our Saxon Court officials, and their grievances, transmitted through the Queen and Princess Augusta, reached the King's ears, who took it into his head that he would never please any one.

The trouble from first to last was nothing but peevishness on the part of our Court officials, who thought their prestige undermined by the slightest deviation from Court etiquette, and as a matter of principle did everything they could to make every function not within the four corners of Dresden ceremonial look like a fiasco, and whenever the King was angry, always had Marcolini's instructions to fall back on. Marcolini himself would have brought them to heel if he could have seen the mischief they were making, but there was no one now about the King's person, since Graf Bose had gone on ahead, who would assume the responsibility—and all the others meant things to “gang agley.”

I gradually took the liberty of intervening more and more, and because everything would pass off smoothly in consequence, the King gradually came to have more confidence in me. But it cut both ways, because the peevishness was now directed against me. For a colonel and an aide-de-camp to have a say in Court etiquette was unprecedented, everything had to be upset to make sure of missing the right note on every occasion. No one, of course, stayed to consider that the party who was most harmed was the King.

In everything in the nature of a Court function to which the Polish attach so much importance Frederick Augustus was always made to appear at a disadvantage, everything Saxon to be cheeseparing and stuffy, and because the King was aware of this yet was unable to strike the right note, he

tried to find his way out of his dilemma by assuming a sort of frigid immobility which made him still less popular. He then appeared stilted with a painfully blank expression from which nothing at all could be gleaned, not a trace of kindness or interest, pleasure or of disapproval, which could only be attributed to entire lack of intelligence, or indifference to what was going on about him, and was of course bound to repel.

## II

### THE COURT EN ROUTE

**F**ORTUNATELY we travelled very slowly, and at every lodging for the night a big assemblage of the local inhabitants foregathered, and as soon as the moment of the first entry was over, the King, with his exceptional gift for saying the right thing, won all hearts. In appropriate fashion he contrived to say something pleasant to every one without condescending to the level of paying compliments. On the road he had seen and noted every detail of his surroundings, of the condition of the countryside, to such good purpose, and was in general so well informed in the case of every individual, once he had identified him and knew the whereabouts of his estates, that he was able to make some personal remark that showed his interest, so that every one, even if he had begun by being prejudiced against him, left him delighted by his graciousness, kindness, and sympathy and full of admiration for his knowledge.

Everywhere, whenever the notables of the district welcomed him, he answered their address in a short impromptu speech, but with clearness and dignity, and at once entered into general conversation about local interests, in the course of which he astonished them all with his modesty, sound knowledge of the state of affairs, and the correctness of his judgment. In reply to a Polish address or with people who knew neither French nor German, he continued the conversation in Polish, but was fond of going off, on the plea that he was not fluent in Polish, into French or Latin, and in all these languages expressed himself with an elegance peculiar to himself. He realized what a good impression his attitude made on these occasions, and was at pains to

make up for any harm the hesitancy of his manner when he was not dealing with individuals might have done.

Gablenz, the chamberlain whose duty it was to do the honours on these occasions, and who had the advantage of speaking Polish perfectly, looked upon this kind of Court reception as an intrusion and would have liked to put a stop to it altogether. But, as it was within my sphere of duties to present the French generals and other ranks who were still all over the country, I informed the King of their attendance, and consequently the Poles could not be turned away at the first few halts, and I took the presentation of the Poles upon myself. With the help of the few Polish words I had picked up, I made the provisional acquaintance of the party in question and presented him to the King in French, or with some indication of the language to enable the latter to open up conversation at once.

If I had picked up any particulars about him or his relatives I hinted at them when presenting him; for example, "*Monsieur N., frère de Madame N.,*" or, "*Monsieur N., retourné depuis peu de l'armée d'Italie,*" and so on. I did the same in the presentations to the Queen, when I often, if the presentee spoke neither French nor German, played the interpreter half in Polish, half in Latin. Hand-clasps and embraces, after the Royal Family had withdrawn, always testified to the pleasure and satisfaction of the Poles, and I succeeded so far that Gablenz the chamberlain, if he did not want to be ignored entirely, had to adopt a more affable and obliging attitude towards the Poles.

The whole country was, of course, agog for news, and first-hand news, of its new sovereigns. The people who had met the Royal Family on their journey wrote to their relatives and friends, and all were charmed by closer acquaintance; they forgot the stilted stiffness of manner at a distance, in fact it appealed to them as pertaining to dignity.

It is . . . . . make things for sovereigns to win its heart if they will take the trouble to do so.

The arrangements for the journey down to the pettiest detail were Marcolini's work; this means that, while the expense of it was enormous, it was always stinted in essentials and the trail of petty, not far short of squalid, parsimony was over it all. The reader will have made the acquaintance of Marcolini pretty thoroughly in the course of these pages, so the constant recital of the consequences of his cheese-paring that blighted our Court can only excite disgust. But it is impossible to chronicle the course of events in our country faithfully without harping on this point.

Only some general observations of the arrangements for the journey are put on record here.

It was like the migration of a people. The vanguard consisted of sixteen waggons with four or six horses apiece laden with heavy stuff, which could have been bought in Warsaw a good deal below the cost of its transport, and on its arrival was quite useless because they had ransacked the lumber-rooms of the Royal Palace to accumulate it and it had been patched up in hot haste. It sounds incredible but is none the less true that old pails, wash-tubs, and the like were carted about just as if we were going to settle in a desert. All this was charged against the King as new gear and meant a large sum for Marcolini.

The ladies and gentlemen of the suite had to dispatch their baggage by this "column," as it was called, but none of them were allowed more than one trunk. Every one was allowed to take his requisites for the journey in a port-manteau, on no account too large, with him. That column was, however, earmarked for heavy baggage only, but not in the way of furniture, mattresses or the like, with which the Warsaw palace was amply supplied. It was in the charge of the numerous domestic staffs of the Household such as cellarers, head cooks, kitchen clerks, vegetable cooks, coal clerks and so on, who were all drawing handsome allowances and turned whole waggons to account for the purposes of a profitable trade by barter. Thus the cellarman Haugk, for example, had a four-horsed fourgon at his disposal at the King's expense to take a consignment of

wine for trading on his own account. It is in itself an odd arrangement for a cellarman to be allowed to carry on a wine business surreptitiously—for he only did so overtly in Warsaw, not in Dresden. Several waggons were loaded with sugar, tea, coffee, wax-candles and the like, for the use of the Court, but huge quantities of all these articles were taken surreptitiously for the purposes of profiteering. I know for a fact, not only from many purchasers who asked me whether they were free to buy the goods, but from the chief of the French police, who gave me a list of the names of vendors and purchasers, that these things were sold without any secrecy in Warsaw. It is patent that Marcolini knew all about this; it could not have been kept from his knowledge, and I had an opportunity later on, as I shall relate, of making sure of it; but whether he only winked at this trading in the case of people whom he had to tolerate because they were indispensable to him for his perquisites, in other words, his frauds and embezzlements in the Household, or whether it was a commercial enterprise in which he was interested, I cannot definitely state.

The Royal stables, in charge of a groom, Schlottem, went with this column, numbers of chargers for the King, the adjutants, for the Chamberlain Gablenz, who represented the Master of the Horse, but had nothing to do with the stables, the pages, outriders, grooms, ostlers and the rest of them. Of all these horses four, nine at most, were worth anything; for the use of the adjutants, for example, a big charger, white with age, and broken-winded but otherwise quite a good goer, and a little roan that was so played-out and stiff that Colonel Gutschmid usually came down with it three or four times before he was clear of the town, were included for two years in succession.

This first column set out a week or perhaps a fortnight ahead of the King, and it is a remarkable fact that while it was supposed to have taken the gear, alleged to be necessary, to Warsaw on its first journey, they still contrived to find a pretext for sending it ahead on the occasion of the second journey a year later.

The second column was made up of fourteen coaches and started two or three days before the King. Old Fräulein Gumpfenberg, the only lady-in-waiting the Queen took, the Chief Court Marshal Dziembrowski, the Chamberlain Graf Beust, both of the Queen's Household, the adjutant-general, Colonel Gutschmid, a groom of the chamber in waiting on the Princess, and a page of the chase travelled by it. The other vehicles were for the most part fourgons with provisions and gear, and were accompanied by another horde of cooks, pastry-cooks and the lower grades of the Household.

The King's column was made up of eighteen six- or four-horsed coaches. The Master of the Kitchens, Baron Rachnitz, travelled in one of them. He was supposed to be travelling on ahead to see to the breakfast and the supper, for there was no midday meal; but he always overslept himself, so we usually overtook him within the first half-hour. Two waggon-loads of cooks, pastry-cooks, master cooks, and clerks, kitchen men, gardeners (a curious designation that covered the buyers of kitchen stuff), coal clerks and scullions, and so on, went on in turn the evening before or in the early morning to prepare the breakfast and the supper, and, in order to make sure there should be plenty of idle hands, supernumeraries of every grade, known as reserve kitchen pastry-cooks and so on, were included.

The King drove first, preceded by an outrider, one Thilo, a page of the chase; a page of the chamber, the Queen's head groom and two orderlies were also mounted.

The Queen sat beside the King, he in uniform under his overcoat, and only when it was very cold in furs, but always bareheaded, because his three-cornered hat was uncomfortable in the coach and a round one did not look well with uniform and nothing would induce him to wear a cap. The hat lay on the seat in front of him and he put it on as soon as he got out.

If you had to go to the coach door he would not allow



you to address him bareheaded and became cross if you waited to be told to put your hat on.

Princess Augusta with her principal lady-in-waiting, Frau von O'Bryn, travelled in the second coach; I followed in the third with Chamberlain von O'Bryn. Then came the coaches of the groom and the page of the chambers; of the clergy, Fathers Schneider and Preissler; of the Court physician Kreisslig and the Court surgeon Hedenus and an usher; of the women of the bedchamber and attendants, and one reserve coach; the rest were fourgons, one of which was reserved for the furniture of the travelling chapel.

All the coaches were fitted with boots and packed up to the imperials. But their occupants were only allowed to take one small carpet bag apiece. Even the lockers under the seats in the coach in which I drove with Gablenz were not for our use. All the baggage belonged to the domestic staff and consisted for the most part of trading goods.

We got up very early every morning. The King and Queen only had a cup of tea or coffee, then went into an Assembly room where they entered into conversation for a minute or two, and then heard Mass, always on their knees. After Mass they took coach, but towards midday halted at some spot or other, preferably near an isolated house, for breakfast. The King and Queen, as well as the Princess and the ladies, breakfasted in their coaches, the rest of us where we could grab anything to eat.

As always, it was a mixture of cheeseparing and extravagance. It usually consisted of soup and a stew or some egg dish, cold meat, and bread-and-butter; last of all coffee was served, but it required a lot of luck or the special patronage of the pastry-cook to get a cup. Yet under our very noses these parasites were pouring out coffee for one another and eating cold pasties, which they had perforce to share with us to some extent. And in spite of the mass of baggage there was a shortage of table furniture. We had to borrow plates, napery, knives and forks, plates, cups and glasses, from the wretched, dirty Polish

hovels. If you asked for anything to eat or for a cup of coffee, the question always was : "Have you got a plate or a cup ?" By the time you had got one the answer was : "No more left."

On the other hand, four or six bottles of very bad wine, half a bottle of Malaga and half a bottle of very good Hungarian wine, whole loaves of bread, rolls, a cold joint of veal, usually "turned," and an excellent boiled ham were packed away in our coach every day. We made shift with the latter and the Hungarian wine, some of the rest we gave to our servants on the box; the remnant was a perquisite of the guard, who sat behind and had provided himself with ample supplies for his personal requirements. These people sold wine and provisions whenever we put up for the night in a country town.

At nightfall on reaching our quarters the Royalties retired to their rooms for about half-an-hour while the Household assembled. When persons of distinction, notables of the province or French generals, presented themselves they were announced to the King, but even when this was not the case, he always came into the Assembly room with the Queen and entered into conversation with the company for an hour or even longer. Then they sat down to table, when the King gave the orders for the day. He dined alone with his Consort and daughter, and we others went to the Marshal's table, over which Rachnitz presided. In addition to Gablenz, myself and the clergy, there were the medical attendants and the pages of the chase as well as the officers of the King's bodyguard, the owner of the house, and the visitors whom Rachnitz invited or we introduced.

The table was laid for thirty covers, and every day champagne and dessert wines were supposed to be served. We never saw anything of them, however; the wine was not drinkable and the food was bad, almost always warmed-up stuff of several days' standing that had to disguise itself in ragouts and stews.

At a third, the Chamber table, where the usher li- + e

honours, the valets, the pages of the table, the accountants and the heads of the domestic staff dined; at a fourth the upper footmen and staff of the lower grade had their meal; and at a fifth the linkmen, the stablemen and our personal servants.

Frau von O'Bryn had her seat at our table but, as it was embarrassing to be the only lady among so many men, she preferred to keep her room, where a couple of courses were served to her.

No doubt the subsistence of such a numerous retinue meant heavy expenditure, but a good deal of it was purveyed. The head foresters, Plotz and Schirnding in Hoyerswerda, and Guben had purveyed eighteen wild boar, six stags and large quantities of partridges and hares. All this game was packed up, but none of it ever appeared at table.

When we arrived at Crossen the following morning the gendarme Kürst, who had gone on ahead to see to the relays, reported that the breakfast kitchen staff was still in the market-place selling game. They had then driven off in such a hurry that they had left a crate of hares behind, which, on my orders, was pitched into one of the fourgons. As the King did not call a halt anywhere, we caught them up in a hollow road on this side of the bridge. They turned into a side road to avoid recognition, but could not pass us after that, so when we reached the spot arranged for breakfast, there was nothing there and not a cook in sight.

The King grew testy and wanted to know the reason for this mismanagement. Rachnitz, who, instead of going ahead, had remained behind, appeared at last with the excuse that he and the cooks had lost their way; he did not know where they had strayed, but it was not their fault, but their military escort's, which had not had proper directions for the route (as though the drivers would not have known it; and apart from that it was a main high-road). His answer to the question whether nothing was to be had was a shrug of his shoulders.

We had started from Guben at five and it was now past eleven o'clock, and the Queen, who could not do without

nourishment for long intervals, was feeling indisposed. Gablenz went to our coach to fetch a remnant of Hungarian wine and some crusts of bread, while I ran to Rachnitz's coach, where I found a meal laid out on the front seats. I took a cold pasty, a loaf, a bottle of Burgundy, a wine reserved for the Queen's use, and a small flask which turned out to be sherry, of which the King has one small glass and no more every afternoon.

I took it all to the Royal coach and said I had found it.

"Where?"

"Benisch gave it to me."

He was one of the serving-men, one of Rachnitz's confidants who always drove with him; but I had appropriated it, he had not given it to me. Rachnitz stood agape and never said a word; the King, who was always unsuspecting, commended Benisch's foresight, but the Queen, screening her mouth with her hand, laughed aside at me.

Rachnitz, coming to the conclusion that he would have to make the best of a bad job, went back himself to look for more, and it turned out that this provident man had a smoked tongue and other cold meats, and even ground coffee with a charcoal heater to warm it. The Queen then did the honours and sent a portion of all the viands to the Princess in her coach, and told me to tell her how lucky I had been in my forage. The Princess, who was very hungry, was very pleased with these unexpected comforts and asked me how I had come by them. I told her the truth, that I had looted Rachnitz, and she enjoyed her meal all the better for it. She divided the pasty and anything else there was among us, and sent some of it to her woman of the bedchamber and to the confessor, so that not a scrap was left.

The King had not a word to say, but when she expressed her astonishment to Rachnitz that everything had been so unfortunate as to go astray, he broke in irritably, "That has got nothing to do with you."

Is it unfair, in view of Rachnitz's precautions not to run short himself, to arrive at the conclusion that he had his

share in the sale of the provisions? He could not help knowing that all the game, including the recovered hares, had vanished without having appeared on the King's or any other table. It is, in fact, almost incredible that he was not privy to the sale of provisions at Crossen, but yet I should be inclined to acquit him of any participation in this trade.

All the lower-grade servants of the Court were directly under Marcolini; Rachnitz was only nominally head of the Court administration, he had to let the people go their own way. The name of "the Count" was a magic formula at which every one at the Saxon Court trembled. To offend the least of his hangers-on, one might almost say of his gang, inevitably entailed the greatest annoyances. Rachnitz therefore shut his eyes to all their peculations, and in return enjoyed the benefit of being excellently served and attended himself, and his absent-mindedness served him well, not to be put to blush as a Marshal of the Court when things went wrong. People were accustomed to his peculiarity of never seeing anything of what was going on about him or around him, and therefore believed he really did not see the meanness of an equipment that was costing such immense sums.

In the meanwhile he was quite alive to the comfort he was enjoying and careful whom he chose to enjoy it with him. I had noted for some time that he always offered the seat beside him to Father Schneider and kept his glass filled. The wine at our table was so abominable that no one would drink it, and I was surprised at the Father's lack of palate. One evening I exchanged unobserved the bottle standing in front of the Marshal's chair for the one next to it. At dinner Rachnitz as usual filled his neighbour's glass and the latter had a sip, lowered his glass, had another sip and put it down on the table. After a minute or two he asked Father Preissler how he liked the wine; the latter, who had got the good bottle, replied, "better than usual."

For all his absent-mindedness, Rachnitz had overheard the whispered conversation; he took a mouthful of his

glass, took Father Schneider's glass away and called for the butler, who, to judge by his gesticulations, was full of apologies, and immediately afterwards another bottle was forthcoming. The rest of us went on with our inferior wine.

In Karge, our first night lodgings in Poland, Graf Unruh entertained us with really princely hospitality; he had refurnished the whole house for the occasion. The road from the frontier to his manor was illuminated by pine torches. The house and the courtyard were lit up with great taste by oil lamps, and the inhabitants too had illuminated their little town. The dinner-table was handsomely decorated and the viands and wines were of the choicest. Dinner was laid for more than eighty covers, and the supplies of everything were lavish. The others, down to the lowest menials, were no less pleased with their several tables. There was no lack of attendants, but the Royal footmen ousted them, and in return packed up the unopened bottles of wine and the broken meats.

In a less lavish fashion, but none the less at considerable expense and with the utmost propriety, the Prince Archbishop of Gnesen, Radzinski, entertained us at his seat Cionzyn, but his clerical steward was worldly wise enough to keep the dining-room locked as soon as dinner was over.

In Posen I happened to learn from the prefect Pominski that, apart from other requirements, the Royal kitchens had ordered twenty-five ducats' worth of fish, although nothing of the kind was served at table.

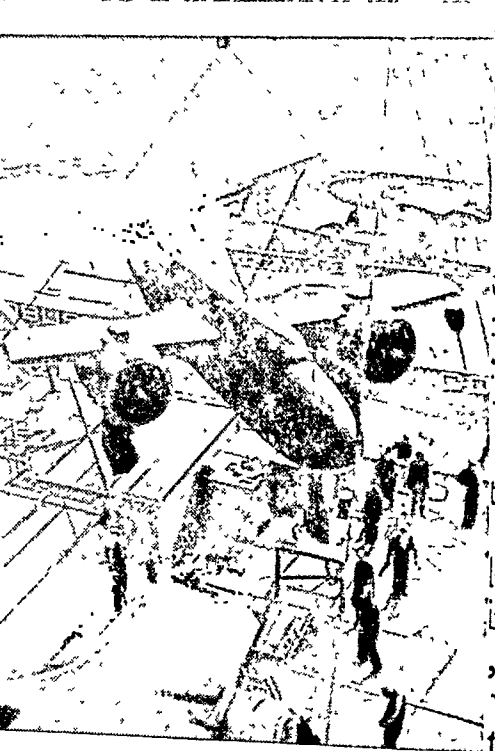
In Wierzbie our host Morzinski spoke only Polish and the mistress of the house was blind, but their daughter, a young widow, did the honours. At dinner she kept on looking round over her shoulder, spoke to the lackey in waiting, but could not make herself understood. The family had not only furnished the kitchens with supplies of every kind, but with good wines—burgundy, champagne, Rhenish and Hungarian as well; not a drop of it was produced, nor was any of it returned. When I heard of it, I told Gablenz about it and we both discussed it with Rach-

share in the sale of the provisions? He could not help knowing that all the game, including the recovered hare, had vanished without having appeared on the King's any other table. It is, in fact, almost incredible that I was not privy to the sale of provisions at Crossen, but I should be inclined to acquit him of any participation in this trade.

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American war planes, provided through lend-lease, are in action on the various fighting fronts. Lend-lease twin-engine bombers are shown (above) being hoisted aboard ship in an unnamed American port from a lighter alongside. They are bound for distant Allied ports. More bombers in the background are awaiting loading. Expert welders fasten the big planes securely to the ship's deck to protect shipments from damage during heavy weather at sea. (Below) A ground crew hoists a bomb through the bomb doors of a huge Flying Fortress at an All-American operational base in Britain.



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nitz. He saw no way out of it except to promise that everything should be paid for. Whether it was or whether the family accepted payment I am not in a position to say.

Big as were the supplies we took about with us, by the time we reached Posen, where we broke the journey for a day, the ordinary table wine had run out and the Glogau wine at three talers a bottle, which was really quite undrinkable and disagreed with all of us, was served. They conveyed this wine at considerable expense to Warsaw as well, although a far superior vintage at nine Polish gulden the bottle was to be had from a French wine merchant there. When the grooms of the chamber at length made complaints about the wine, this latter brand was served at their table, but what was known as the "Glogau Mixture," which was probably compounded within the Palace precincts, continued to be served at ours.

In Blomie, our last night lodging, deputations from Warsaw began to arrive to meet us. The city had forwarded large quantities of provisions for the subsistence of the Court. A regular depot of bread, meat, vegetables, game, poultry, fish and smoked meats was transferred to the kitchen staff, together with rare fruits for the time of year, such as grapes, peaches, plums and the like, as well as hot-house fruit like pineapples, oranges, lemons and so on. It had been assumed that the Court would wish to entertain the parties travelling out to welcome it, and the supplies were based on a scale to correspond. They had also thought of refreshments for the domestic staff and had sent beer and spirits for this purpose.

All this was partly requisitioned, partly looted, and two hours after the King's arrival the footmen were so drunk that not one of them could keep his legs, and Chamberlain von Gablenz and I had to carry the King's dinner-table into his rooms because the footmen of the chamber kept on tumbling over with it. Amid this scandalous state of affairs Rachnitz was sitting about open-mouthed, taking snuff incessantly, and, lost in contemplation, failed to see or hear anything of what was going on under his nose.

The deputies of Warsaw city came and went, and no one was invited to stay, although all of them had been waiting for the King, who did not arrive until five o'clock, since midday, and none of them could have had a meal. The representations I made were fruitless; Rachnitz's excuse was that he had had no instructions and had made no arrangements. He asked me to invite only the officers of the French Guard of Honour, and to be sure to give him the exact number to enable him to arrange the table accordingly.

### III

## ETIQUETTE ON THE DEFENSIVE

**I**N the meanwhile Graf Bose had arrived from Warsaw, which he had reached a few days before we did, with the news that Marshal Davout was on his way to welcome the King. I was summoned and instructed to meet him, and seized the opportunity to ask Graf Bose whether the Marshal would be commanded to dinner.

That, the Minister thought, was a matter of course. But I begged him to make quite sure. He submitted it to the King, who said yes at once, but then remembered that both in Cioncyn and Nieborow it had only been the family party, and that he had not asked either the Archbishop of Gnesen or Prince Radziwill to join him at table. I was by then allowed to have an occasional say in matters of etiquette, and in Nieborow had induced him to conduct Princess Radziwill who received him at the door of his coach, up the steps and to invite her to sup with the family. I fell back on that, but, as a qualified Court official, Chamberlain Gablenz had to be consulted as well.

I went to fetch him and, in the meanwhile, told him what the point at issue might be but that is where I made my mistake. He flushed with annoyance and replied acidly that, as he could see military ceremonial was being introduced, there was no point in consulting him first. He reminded the King firmly and emphatically that in accordance with Saxon Court etiquette no guest, apart from princes of ruling dynasties, could ever be commanded to the family dinner-party.

The King wavered and sent for Rachnitz. He was at

usual distraught and began to stammer, but as soon as Gablenz had given his opinion, went over to his side. Graf Bose unfortunately had left the room, and the King dismissed us without having come to a decision. As we were leaving he called me back and commanded me, when we were alone, to give him my honest opinion. I submitted that the objections raised did not appear to me to be valid, because the Royal table on travel could hardly be regarded as a Family dinner under the strict etiquette of the Court, at which the great officers of the Court were themselves in waiting. He admitted that.

"But," he objected, "they happen to have called it a Family dinner and it will be regarded as such."

In reply I ventured to remind him that he had been gracious enough to command me to dine at his table in Berlin, though I was only a major, whereas the rank of colonel only would have qualified me for the distinction. That proved rather more effective, because Marcolini, who had been in attendance in Berlin at the time, had made the arrangements; but neither the Queen nor the Princess had been present. The King then propounded one or two alternatives which he immediately rejected himself. He would request his Consort and his daughter to dine alone, and himself dine with Rachnitz, Gablenz, me and the Marshal; but in that case a lot of the distinguished strangers present would have to be invited.

This gave me a clue that succeeded in providing a solution of the problem; I suggested that he should leave the rest of us out, but invite Bose the Minister and the Mistress of the Robes, Madame O'Bryn, to dine at his table, which, in the circumstances, could not possibly be regarded as a Family dinner.

He was delighted with this solution and I had to communicate his decision to Graf Bose and the others at once, and no one could raise any objections to it.

The Marshal only brought a Saxon and a French aide-de-camp with him. Rachnitz immediately engaged the latter in a whispered conversation about Freemasonry, in the

course of which he completely forgot everything else. Gablenz had invited one or two Poles, and I had scribbled the names of the guests on a scrap of paper, including Davout's aides-de-camp, not more than five in all, but Rachnitz was so entirely absent-minded that he had forgotten it, and when we were about to sit down to table there were not enough covers. Gablenz and I got up at once and went into a little room adjoining the King's chamber, and saw that only two bottles of the inferior wine and a quarter bottle of what was known as the Queen's bin were available.

Gablenz asked whether no other wine was going to be served and was told "No! No other had been provided."

Whereat he at last lost his temper, dashed into the adjoining room and called Rachnitz to account, referring to the supplies he had taken over that very day.

Rachnitz had plenty of excuses; they had not sampled the wine; the stores were too far away to draw more, and so forth.

"Well," said Gablenz, "at any rate you have got some champagne; have a bottle of that served."

"Yes," replied the other, "there's champagne no doubt, but they have forgotten the champagne glasses."

But the Poles had provided for that emergency; there was an array of them in the little room whither I had retired with Gablenz. Rachnitz had to give orders to serve champagne at the Royal table, and the Marshal and Graf Bosc had a couple of glasses of it because the other wine was undrinkable.

But while I was swallowing my meal, standing, in the little ante-room with Gablenz, we saw the footmen setting pasties and other dishes on one side without having served them at table and, among other things, emptying a plate of plums—a delicacy at that season of the year—into their pockets.

Not to have to return to the squalid topic of these pilferings again, I am going to give a few further examples. The Marshal one day in Warsaw gave me to understand that

he wished to report to the King direct about certain matters, without, however, occasioning any stir and therefore without applying formally for an audience.

I reported this to the King and he decided that Davout was to come about seven o'clock that evening, and that I was to introduce him without any fuss. Just before the appointed time I went into the ante-room, but there was no light in any single one of the three rooms through which we had to pass. I immediately hurried to the Wardrobe to give orders that the lights were to be lit at once, but they flatly refused to do so. They argued that the order must come from Rachnitz. I protested that there was no time, that the candles were in place everywhere and only waiting to be lit, and that it was simply monstrous to leave a King's antechambers in darkness. Under threat of going to the King forthwith and asking for his orders, I at last succeeded in getting the candles lit, but only one in each of the big rooms, which just served to make the darkness visible. I felt ashamed at having to conduct the Marshal through this flight of dark rooms, but as soon as he was with the King, I lit one candle in every one of the sconces with my own hands.

When, a few days later, he repeated his visit I spoke to the Marshal of the Court and asked him to give orders for the candles to be lighted, but he raised great difficulties; "wax candles were very expensive," and "the Count" (*i.e.* Marcolini) had enjoined the strictest economy, and he, Rachnitz, had to account to him for all unauthorized expenditure. I replied that I would write to the Count myself and tell him that I was responsible for the expense, that I had noticed that Herr von Rachnitz's two ante-rooms were brilliantly illuminated every night, and that I failed to consider it proper, or in accordance with Marcolini's instructions, that visitors should have to grope their way to the King in the dark.

Thenceforward the barely necessary lights were kept burning in the ante-rooms.

On the occasion of one ball in the course of the King's

second stay at Warsaw in 1809 they had contrived to find a kind of candle compounded of some substance that emitted a thick black reek and a most noxious smell all over the room. Within an hour all embroideries and all metal-work were black with soot, as were the guests' faces. When they wiped them with a handkerchief, it left a black smear, and the ladies, who at that date still wore rouge, were painfully embarrassed. All white and light-coloured fabrics were soon soiled, feathers more especially looked like chimney-sweepers' brushes. One's hands became black and left a dirty smear on everything one touched.

No reek of unkempt oil lamps in a peasant's hovel could have produced such devastating, unsightly and rapid results. And this, mind you, not in some low-ceilinged room, but in the magnificent marble hall of the palace two storeys in height. Opening all the top-light windows did no good. All satins, velvets and similar materials which would not stand washing were ruined; all silver and gold embroideries had to be cleaned the following day with spirits of wine, all cloth fabric with breadcrumbs. For a whole week one heard nothing but coughing and throaty noises.

The King had, of course, noticed it too, but they had persuaded him that the cross draughts in the hall were to blame for it. Orders were given that the balls, of which this was the first, that were to be given all through the Carnival season were to be cancelled. The King had apparently swallowed this excuse. But when I happened to be alone with him a few days later he asked me what I thought of it. I told him frankly it was the fault of the candles.

"That is quite impossible," he said. "I have made inquiries; they are the same candles we burn in Dresden, and they, as you know, never smoke."

I only smiled without saying a word, and when he pressed me I made no secret of what I knew, and that was that the Dresden candles had been sold in Warsaw and these of inferior, but very cheap, make had been purchased. He

asked me if I could prove it. A few days later I handed him a schedule, drafted by the French police, on which not only the names of the purchasers but the actual quantity of the candles, wines, sugar, coffee, chocolate and other goods purchased were accurately entered. He took it with the exclamation, "The French police really do poke their nose into everything"; ordered me not to say a word about it, and wound up with the ejaculation, "Really this swindling will have to be stopped."

The balls were resumed and the reek did not recur, but speculation continued unabashed.

The outstanding rock of offence to the whole of the Saxon Court was the parade and the *messe militaire*. They amounted to nothing more than a church parade which Davout conceived to be an act of courtesy towards the King, whose piety was well known. For on the Sundays, when the King might be pleased to command a church parade, the garrison of Warsaw had orders to parade in the courtyard of the Palace, and after he had inspected it, to march past him into church. Here it was drawn up in the gangways, and on the elevation of the Host every man was to kneel, except a small detachment that had orders to present arms, and the band. It was precisely the same ceremonial that had been customary in Dresden on Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Corpus Christi for some sixty years, with the sole exception that in this case the order for the salute was not given by word of mouth but by a movement of the sword, and that the band did not play.

Napoleon occasionally submitted to these ordeals, but then he went to Mass in boots, a monstrous solecism in our eyes. The King used to appear in silk hose at the military levee at half-past ten, in boots and with his hat for the review at eleven, and in a freshly powdered wig and silk stockings in church at half-past eleven. It was, of course, an effort to him, but he thought it his duty to submit to it regularly every Sunday and holiday. Marcolini himself had told him in Dresden that he would have to attend the review, but he thought he could do that with his hat — his arm



and silk hose Before our departure he instructed me to remind the King about it.

"Car," said he, "oublie quelquefois, le roi, ce qu'il doit faire, faut le lui rappeler." The hat under the arm did not appear appropriate even to him.

"Mais," he continued, "tenez, le prendre comme ça,"—and he raised his hat above his head—"n'a pas besoin de l'ôter à tout instant, s'il ne le met pas."

Marcolini's precepts brooked no opposition, but the valets were furious at the work—having to dress and undress the King three times in the course of one morning—entailed on them. They cursed the Marshal, the French and "damnable" Warsaw.

Gablentz, who refused to waive his attendance on the King, and felt out of place in his Court dress and silk stockings in the Palace square, cursed no less bitterly. The confessors regarded the military band and the "Present arms" in church as sacrilege and whined about the interruption to their devotions. They laid it to the charge of the King's conscience that the Queen had been scared to death by it, although she knew all about it, but her Josephine, who was not prepared for it, was believed to have had an attack of the vapours, and the Princess had not been able to regain her composure for the whole of the rest of the service.

Harassed on all sides on a matter that was of itself irksome to him, the King could not help becoming irritable; I was there myself when he snapped at the Queen when she tried to discuss it, but he confessed to me that he would be glad to be relieved of the ceremonial. I submitted that, after all, it depended only on himself to undergo it as rarely as he pleased. He could not bring himself to believe that. To appear in boots at the military levee in the morning appeared to him a thing that could not be done. I only carried my point with difficulty, and only after having made him see that Davout was put out by having to attend the review in all weathers and had expressed his astonishment that the King had not cancelled it. After that it was only held on Saints' days and on Christmas Eve.

The Memoirs have already referred frequently to the bad blood between Saxons and Poles, deliberately fostered by the Court officials of every grade from the pettiest motives of self-interest. Added to this came misunderstandings with the French military authorities, usually due to the linguistic difficulties, or, rather, those of military terminology.

One morning Colonel Gutschmid, Funck's brother adjutant in waiting on the King in Warsaw, appeared in a furious rage and asked him whether he were prepared to take the parole, the watchword for the day, from the head cook, who had probably received it from one of the scullions. The reference, was, of course, to the egregious Skimpole-Rachnitz in his capacity of Marshal of the Court in charge of the Royal kitchens. It was all part and parcel, he stormed, of a French plot to insult the Saxon troops by ranking them below the Palace lackeys.

As Funck knew his Gutschmid for a little man puffed up with vanity and a rabid Francophobe, because neither the French nor the Poles would accept him at his own valuation, he did not pay much attention to the outbreak until in the course of the morning he fell in with Rachnitz, who, in his absent-minded way, inquired whether the officers of the Palace Guard, which was made up of detachments of Saxon, French and Polish troops, had assembled to receive the parole. Funck replied offhand that he assumed Colonel Gutschmid would be giving it out shortly.

"No," replied Rachnitz, beaming with complacency. "They will receive it from me," and went on to explain that this was by Marshal Davout's direct orders.

The French battalion commander of the Palace Guard saw nothing derogatory in receiving the parole from a man in a handsome uniform, and wearing the epaulettes of a

senior officer, but the Saxon officers, egged on by Gutschmid, were in a state verging on mutiny, and Funck thought their resentment sufficiently serious to ask Graf Bose to call the King's attention to the matter, as he felt sure that Davout would never issue orders on what was after all a purely domestic concern of the Court.

"The King was uncomfortable and quite inclined to sympathise with the indignation of his officers, but explained that he really had had no choice because it was one of the regulations of the Marshal's 'programme' which, it was expressly stated, had been drawn up on the model of that obtaining at the Imperial Court "

It appeared that on the journey to Warsaw Davout had sent the King a dispatch, which he called a "programme," outlining the military arrangements for his entry and embodying suggestions for the composition and duties of military guard at the Palace. The King, only too happy to have his mind made up for him, had at once accepted the suggestions for orders as read. The parole would at Napoleon's Court be given out by the "maréchal du palais," who Davout assumed would be a military officer of at least general rank. Hence the startling promotion of Marshal Rachnitz.

The explanation did not relieve the King of his worries.

"But what am I to do now?" he asked. "I should not like to hurt the susceptibilities of the officers and I don't want to hurt Rachnitz's feelings now that I have told him to do it and he seemed so pleased about it. Can't you think of a way out?"

Funck proved equal even to this occasion with all his ingenuity. He noticed that the "programme" left it open to doubt whether the Palace Guard was to have its own separate parole or whether it was to be the same as the

common to the garrison and Davout's whole command. He proposed to put this point to the Marshal and to suggest that he would be good enough to let them know every morning the parole he was giving for the army, and calculated on Davout, as a matter of courtesy, protesting that the choice would more suitably emanate from the King. So even Rachnitz as a civilian could hardly feel aggrieved if a purely purely military parole was not communicated to him. Thanks to Davout's courtesy, the scheme worked out according to plan, and it was finally arranged that every Sunday the Marshal would receive the paroles for the ensuing week from the King.

## IV

### “LE ROI S'AMUSE”

**B**UT there were other occasions when the recalcitrancy and peevish bad temper of this camarilla of Court officials, into whose hands the King under Marcolini's machinations had surrendered himself, came very near to wrecking the entertainments arranged to do him honour and—an aspect on which, as Funck points out, none of them seems to have wasted a thought—of making their master look ridiculous in the eyes of his new subjects. It must have called for resourcefulness and real devotion to “find a way out” in such a predicament as Funck relates of Davout's entertainment in honour of the King's birthday—in fact, it impressed him so much that he relates it at full length twice over.

“The King disliked the celebration of his birthday on December 23 because it was the anniversary of his father's death as well. Davout thought it incumbent on him to give an entertainment and asked me what usually happened in Dresden. I told him the reason why there were no celebrations in Dresden at the Court itself, but that a minister usually gave a banquet in the town. Davout replied that the veteran Marshal of the Diet, Malachowski, would give a big dinner-party, and he himself proposed to give an entertainment to celebrate the occasion a week earlier. It would take the form of a big supper and a ball, but previously a few officers and Warsaw ladies proposed

to perform an allegorical play, composed for the occasion. Would I therefore inquire, without mentioning his name, whether the King would be pleased to honour this performance with his presence and let him know? But I was to be quite frank, because he was well aware that it was not etiquette at the Court of Dresden for the King to attend any entertainment at a private house, but hoped that his appearance at a performance in the Opera might prove an exception.

But I was not to mention it to a soul, "*pour ne pas compromettre le roi, et surtout,*" he added, "*n'en mêlez pas Monsieur de Bourgoing qui fourre son gros nez partout.*"

I thought the simplest way was to repeat the whole of this conversation to the King and to leave it to him to decide, nor did I omit the allusion to M. Bourgoing, which he thought entirely to the point. But he consulted Graf Bose, who preferred to deal with everything through the proper diplomatic channels and thought it necessary to consult the ambassador. So the matter passed out of my hands and no answer reached me. Bourgoing enveloped it in an atmosphere of importance and mystery as if the balance of Europe hung in the issue. I finally had to admit to the Marshal as some days had elapsed, that, through no fault of mine, Bourgoing had intervened and thought he was going to achieve a master stroke of diplomacy by inducing the King, for the first time since his accession, to accept the hospitality of a subject, and he a Marshal of France. But because Graf Bose was against it, in order not to run any risks, he kept his negotiations secret, even from the Marshal himself. Notes were exchanged; diplomatic pressure, even the threat of the Emperor's displeasure, was brought to bear; and the King gave way.

It was only then that Davout for the first time heard of the honour it was proposed to confer on him, but for which he was not in the least prepared. He was, of course, bound to be overjoyed, but he frankly confessed to me that it was a little unexpected and that, if he could have counted on it, he would not have waited until the very day to request the King to confer it.

The Court thereupon learned that Frederick Augustus was about to accept the hospitality of a Marshal of France at supper. The news of Saxony's fall could not have excited greater consternation. All of them, down to the flunkys, regarded the dignity of the King and of the whole of the Court to be irretrievably injured, bewailed the wickedness of the times and all they had to put up with, but, as a matter of fact, were only curious to see how it would all turn out. Even neutrals, like Beust and Rachnitz, wagged their heads, and the rest predicted that no good would come of it because they were firmly resolved it should not.

To save their faces, Graf Bose and Bourgoing, after a long conference, had agreed that the event should assume the guise of pure impromptu; that the Marshal had only invited the King to the play and the latter had then expressed a wish to watch the dancing and would informally accept some refreshments his host was sure to offer him. The prelude was played to this tune but nobody kept to his cue and, because either no one could or no one would keep to the part assigned him, it had throughout the air of a rehearsed stiff function.

In order to view the arrangements for the banquet room, so the idea was, the Marshal would conduct the Royal Family to a handsomely decorated withdrawing-room, at one end of which a dais, raised three or four steps, with a balustrade, like a very roomy box was erected, from which the Royal party under a canopy could view the length of the table of some sixty or eighty covers. Opposite them at the other end of the room stood a very handsome sideboard. The apartment was large enough to seat the company and to leave enough room to move round the table. The Royal Family would greet the company from the dais and a few minutes later descend the steps to enter into conversation with the guests, view the handsome bronzes on the sideboard and look into the adjoining rooms, where supper was to be served at several tables.

In the meanwhile a table would be set in all haste on the

dais in front of the chairs under the canopy and laid, with elegant decorations, for three covers, so that everything would be in readiness when the King returned. He would not sit down until five further covers had been laid for the Marshal, Monsieur and Madame Bourgoing, for old Malachowski and Count Stanislaus Potocki. They would then take their seats and the guests at the big table, the upper end of which was left vacant, would seat themselves as well.

Needless to say, everything was on a lavish scale and the attendants were numerous. But the two chamberlains, Gablenz and Graf Beust, Colonel Gutschmid, the grooms of the chamber, the pages of the chamber and of the chase, the valets, the clerks and the lackeys, who crowded in, took up their positions behind the chairs of the King, the Queen and the Princess, and congested the area on the dais and the steps so completely that it was impossible to get near it. The French waiters were too polite to elbow the King’s attendants aside and the service broke down entirely.

The company sat stiffly round the table without anything to eat. The King felt uncomfortable and his face assumed that wooden expression it always does when he is conscious that something is wrong and he does not know how to put it right. The Marshal served the soup, but looked round in vain for a hand to relieve him of the plate. He finally had to pass it from hand to hand round the table, for his initial attempt to carry the first plate to the King himself was frustrated by the obstructing crowd.

As ill luck would have it, Graf Bose, on the well-founded plea of ill-health, had already withdrawn. I myself was not on duty that week and therefore had not taken my stand behind the King’s chair, but from a distance I became, to my consternation, aware of the stiff, statuesque pose of the party at the Royal table. I elbowed my way to the footmen and told them to lend a hand.

“That has nothing to do with us,” they replied. “We have had no orders to wait at table.”

“Well, at any rate get out of the way to give the Marshal’s waiters a chance of reaching the table.”



"We have had permission to stand here." And not one of them budged.

I got through to the pages, and they gave me the same answer. I forced my way through to Gablenz, the chamberlain, who had assumed the same cast-iron demeanour as the King and begged him to get the thing going somehow or other. He had felt sure from the first, he answered, that the thing would be a fiasco. If they had consulted him the King would never have been there at all. With these words he took a pinch of snuff and gazed rigidly and immovably straight in front of him.

The soup was consumed, the host in French fashion proffered the dishes standing immediately in front of him, the others tried to do the same, but there was not a soul to remove the soup plates. A more stilted and more ludicrous fiasco had never been staged. I hunted up Rachnitz, who was sitting at the long table enjoying his food and much too distraught to take in what I whispered to him.

I became aware on all sides of the astonishment and curiosity of the company, who, in whispers, called one another's attention to the Royal party. At length I worked my way round by the other side to the Queen's chair. Graf Beust was standing behind her chair, and he in turn gave me for answer that the Marshal's arrangements were no concern of his.

"But is the King to be made to look a figure of fun because none of us support him?"

He shrugged his shoulders. The Queen, who had a very keen sense of hearing, turned round and asked me what the trouble was. I asked her whether she would not request the King to dismiss his suite, because a table had been laid for his attendants. Furthermore, it would make room for them to be served properly. She replied that she was almost swooning with the heat and was sitting fasting in front of inviting dishes; she passed my suggestion on to the King by way of the Princess. He looked round and beckoned to me. I told him the Marshal was in a state of great embarrassment because he could not order the Royal

attendants either to serve at table or to make room for others.

"But I can't order them to, either," he replied.

"But will not your Majesty perhaps, as is etiquette in Dresden, dismiss your suite? There would be room then."

He only then realized that they were all crowded round him, beckoned to Gablenz and told him to sit down to supper with the rest and to discharge the footmen, only the pages were to remain in waiting.

Gablenz had to obey, and did so with a malevolent glance at me, and thereupon, as there was elbow-room, everything went off with propriety and decorum. The pages served the King, the Queen, and the Princess, the Marshal's domestic staff waited on the rest of the company. The King's face gradually thawed into its wonted expression and the conversation, so far as is possible on such occasions, became quite animated.

At dessert a French poem in his honour was presented to the King and permission was asked to have it sung by a choir of amateurs. It terminated in a toast, whereupon all the company rose and raised their glasses. The King returned thanks in a short speech and drank the Emperor's health.

After dinner we proceeded to a box in the theatre, the auditorium of which had been converted into a ball-room. The dancing began with an allegorical ballet, danced below the Royal box.

The Marshal asked me whether the Princess would be pleased to dance if he were to invite her. I was scared because to descend from the Royal box into the ball-room was to put rather too severe a strain on our Court etiquette, but I replied that I would ask the Mistress of the Robes. But before I did so, I made my way unobtrusively to the King and, without telling him that the suggestion originated from the Marshal, I only inquired what answer I should give if the proposal should be made. The King, who was chatting to his Consort and the Princess at the moment, was in such good spirits that he said he had no

objection provided the Mistress of the Robes went down too.

I then referred the Marshal to the latter, and a few minutes later he was leading the Princess down out of the box and they danced a quadrille in which a Marshal of France was the partner of a Princess of Saxony.

The partners had hardly fallen into their places than the King beckoned to me and said,

"What on earth's going to happen? It never occurred to me that my daughter has never learnt the French steps."

I replied that the Princess had an ear for music and was an accomplished dancer, and that I had no doubt all would be well, and, as luck would have it, my hopes were realized after the initial shyness had passed. The Princess then danced one or two other dances and returned to the box very pleased with herself. It was after midnight before the Royal family withdrew; the ball went on to the small hours of the morning.

The King, who had at first felt very uneasy, was so pleased that he gave me proof of his satisfaction by giving me orders in the box once and for all that if, on similar occasions, I should notice anything out of tune with the spirit of general harmony, to let him know without more ado. Graf Bose, whom I informed the following day, approved my intervention, but the rest of the Court hated me for an innovator, intent on upsetting the whole of the old-time Court etiquette and therewith their self-importance. They could not, or would not, realize that on these occasions they were making the King look ridiculous by endeavouring to preserve, not the decorum of the Court, but the stiffness of Dresden provincialism, and that real etiquette consists in conduct that adapts itself to circumstances and that nothing could be more inappropriate than the solemnity of a ceremonial banquet at an entertainment that, above all things, was designed to have the semblance of the impromptu.

They had only one idea; anything not in strict accordance with old traditions, even if it were compatible with the

spirit of Court ceremonial, was not to be allowed to run smoothly, and consequently was bound to make the King feel uncomfortable.

These incidents, related in some detail, may serve to convey an idea of the prejudices, the temper, and the behaviour of the King’s Saxon entourage in Warsaw and at the same time of the obstacles with which they obstructed his own bearing towards his new subjects. Fortunately all these Court officials were personally too insignificant to count for much, and the high officials who came into direct contact with the King soon became aware that his retinue influenced his manner only, not his views, and that he himself attached little importance to them.

None the less the effect was mischievous, because the Poles, judging the spirit and attitude of the whole nation from that of the Saxons the new sovereign had brought in his train, could only deduce jealousy and dislike towards their new fellow-subjects. The more they became convinced that the King did not share this frame of mind, the more deep-rooted grew their contempt for and aversion from Saxon hostility, and this did us the more serious harm because Napoleon, intent on promoting the union of Saxony and Poland for all time, and kept informed of the demeanour of the King and of the Saxon Court in Warsaw, conceived the same impression. In the ill-disguised fractiousness of the Saxons he only saw opposition to his policy and became confirmed in differentiating the nation from the King, for whom he preserved his genuine liking, while regarding his subjects with distrust and dislike.

The King had only to say a word to make his whole Court sing a different tune; he need only have expressed his personal disapproval or instructed his minister to give expression to it. But to do that is not, once and for all, within his range. He is aware of what is amiss or unseemly, is displeased, and makes no secret that he is, but that is as far as it goes. No one worries about it, because every one is well aware that his annoyance will never find expression and that any man who once holds an appointment can

afford to behave as he likes without running any undue risk.

The King was never feared, but as long as Marcolini was alive it was dangerous to incur the latter's displeasure. The Court officials, consequently, never dared assert themselves, or to show signs of a will of their own, even of an opinion of their own. Incompetence and neglect of duty were overlooked, but independence never. If Marcolini had been with us in Warsaw, he would soon have called the Court officials to order. But as his dread of the journey had even overridden his anxiety at letting the King out of his sight for several months, he was quite pleased with the latter's dissatisfaction with his entourage.

It was a guarantee that none of them would insinuate himself into the King's confidence or render him less indispensable.

PART IV  
DRAMA



## I

### REFORM IN THE BREWING

**D**URING his second visit to Warsaw the King became tangled in the organization of the new Polish army which Prince Joseph Poniatowski, as Minister for War, was building up on the Napoleonic model. Missing his accustomed landmarks in the way of the Inspectors-General and the overlapping military Boards of the Saxon administration, he soon lost his way entirely and, as was his wont on similar occasions, handed the whole thing over to his indispensable A.D.C. to unravel for him.

It was a task after his own heart on which Funck flung himself with a zeal that covers many pages of elaborate notes, in his endeavours to translate the new departments of Napoleon's military organization to their approximate equivalents in archaic Saxon terminology. The King, for example, had become hopelessly befogged because he had mistaken the General Staff of the French armies for the Quartermaster-General's, mainly civilians, of the Saxon. The great obstacle to progress which reduced Poniatowski to almost tearful despair was the King's mentality, which, while refusing to envisage the camel he had to swallow, meticulously insisted on dissecting every exotic gnat. The camel, of course, was finance. Who was going to foot the bill?—because the estimate of seven millions exceeded the total revenues of the Duchy. But the subsequent



course of events rendered Funck's strenuous labours of academic and rather severely technical interest only.

One bit of tangible satisfaction Funck did, however, derive from them; he contrived to array the King in a well-cut, comfortably-fitting uniform.

The King, on my repeated promptings, decided after long-drawn hesitation to have a Polish uniform built for him. The cut, the style of uniform befitting his rank, the wig proper to the occasion, all called for many conferences. I at length received my orders to have it made, and I succeeded in finding a cut which combined comfort with the sober decorum the King liked. But first of all the approval of Count Marcolini as Grand Maître de Garde-robe, had to be secured from Dresden. The King tried on coat, waistcoat and breeches doubtfully, and was surprised to find that he felt more comfortable in his new attire than in his Saxon uniform. He was pleased with his appearance and went to show himself off to the Queen, who came back with him and told me I had made him ten years younger. As a matter of fact, he did look much younger, more virile and stalwart in his new coat than in his accustomed white uniform that cramped his chest.

The delight of the Poles was delirious when he appeared in it for the first time. Their enthusiasm was with difficulty restrained within bounds of propriety at Court, but at the playhouse they broke into loud cheers when the King entered his box in his blue coat. He suddenly realized that even among men dress does count and that there is a mean between antiquated pedantry and dandified foppery. I took advantage of the occasion of pointing out to him how the officers in Saxon line regiments were handicapped by their hideous garb.

Whether it was the rejuvenating effect of his new uniform, or renewed pressure from Napoleon, who was demanding a "tableau" of the Saxon army available, the King began



COUNT JOSEPH PONIATOWSKI

*From an engraving by Jean Puhler after a painting by Grassi in the Engraving Room,  
Dresden*



to take Funck's proposals for root and branch reforms on Napoleonic lines more seriously, if hardly less timidly. At any rate, Funck was at length officially instructed to report and to submit a "plan."

It made his position more than a little invidious, because he was quite clear in his own mind that no system would make for efficiency as administered by the then personnel of the High Command. Apart from the Minister of War, Cerrini, a cipher appointed in a hurry because Napoleon on arriving at Dresden had inquired who the minister was, the higher military authorities, the Brass-hats par excellence, were the four Inspectors-General. They were all septuagenarians, physically incapable of active service, who, past troubling themselves with the business of the Service, were only anxious to draw the emoluments which a thoroughly ill-considered and vicious system placed within their grasp, undisturbed. With the senior of their Generals, Zastrow, Funck had already crossed swords on the occasion of the remount deal for the handful of cavalry for which Coulaincourt had been pressing after the Peace. His objections to innovations were at any rate lucid. If the dismounted Saxon cavalry were remounted, he explained, they might actually be employed on active service, and "in the end I might have to move out myself." General Oebischewitz was perhaps a degree more atrophied than Zastrow, but he was living on a great reputation because he once had cut out the shirts and knitted the stockings for his company with his own fair hands; or so, at any rate, Funck records. The other two were nonentities not likely to fall out with their seniors. Behind them stood "the Count," because their methods suited his, and a serried phalanx of lesser Brass-hats.

In view of the imminence of the war with Austria, and

in the light of the "tableau," Napoleon called for three divisions of 10,000 men of all arms, two of which were to be mobilized at once for active service under Marshal Davout, while the third was to be held in reserve in Saxony. The problem set was how to equip these divisions with the transport and train on the Napoleonic model, at short notice, and to find more or less efficient and educated officers to command them.

The opportunities of the Brass-hats, doomed under any system of reform the King might be induced to approve, for obstruction, were therefore, in the transition stages at any rate, and amid the pressure of mobilization, unlimited. The King as usual temporized with half-measures and made confusion worse confounded by supporting his Adjutant-General with one hand and, through the Minister of War—who, after all, was a minister and a proper channel—comforting the disgruntled Brass-hats with the other.

In the meanwhile the Court had returned from Warsaw to Dresden, and "hardly had the King donned his white uniform again than he resumed his stiff formal demeanour. He was no less kind and cordial towards me, but it looked as if he were being so furtively." In other words, Marcolini was in saddle again, and he saw to it that the Adjutant-General, who in Warsaw had played ducks and drakes with Court etiquette, was at once relieved from personal attendance on the King.

The partial respite, he admits, was not unwelcome because it enabled him to give some attention to his private affairs and to take stock of his own position, which was more difficult than promising. Owing to the necessity for providing able-bodied men as chiefs of Staff and Brigadiers for the new active service divisions, he had had to recommend the appointment of his contemporaries and

juniors—more especially Gersdorf, Thielmann, and Langerau, whose names will frequently recur in the memoirs hereafter—for promotion over his own head. It was not long before he discovered that they did not all burn so brightly with pure zeal for the Service as himself. Worse still, as the King's right-hand man in military matters, he found himself personally debarred from active service and thereby from any opportunity of winning the personal prestige and promotion necessary to give effect to his scheme of reform.

My immediate ambition was to be given an appointment in the army on active service, and, as the appointments of the Commanding Officers had already been made, I should not have refused an appointment as a Chief of Staff. Thielmann, however, was very upset when I mentioned this. He was at great pains to induce me to see that an appointment of this kind was beneath my dignity, and, when he could not convince me, he complained bitterly that this decision of mine blocked all his chances of promotion.

I had paid the Prince of Pontecorvo a visit and had been received courteously, but coldly. But this chilliness was directed—I saw that plainly enough—less to myself than to the King's aide-de-camp. He was upset about something, but I did not at the time know what it was; I learnt afterwards that it was about his reception by the King. I had not seen the latter since his return from Warsaw. One evening I was summoned, and after apologizing for troubling me when off duty (a courtesy he rarely omits) he told me that, owing to a mistake on the part of an aide-de-camp who did not know French, a misunderstanding had arisen which I was to smooth away and to wait on the Prince at once for this purpose.

They did not know at first whether to announce me, but, when I referred to a mission from the King, I was admitted. It did not take me long to repair the blunder

of my brother-officer. The Prince thereupon became very outspoken towards me, and remained so until his departure, and always treated me with marked distinction. He told me he would request the King for the future to transact all business through me, not through the minister, who was mote to blame for the misunderstanding than the aide-de-camp.

In this way, thanks to the ineptness of the parties anxious to keep me away from the King, I had become necessary to him again. Shortly afterwards I was promoted Major-General and Inspector of Cavalry, but at the same time my application for an appointment with the Corps in the field was flatly refused. Count Marcolini, although always trying to insinuate others into, and to oust me from, the King's favour, and even on this occasion wanted to entrust the negotiations with Pontecorvo to some one else, felt he had made a mistake, and told me: "It is impossible; the King can't do without you." Graf Bose exclaimed: "So you want to have my death at your door!" and the King said to me, when I expressed my thanks to him: "You have made me realize the abuses prevalent in my army, and I am making you Inspector because I trust you to reform them. Your wish to play your part in the campaign has my approval, but" (these were his own words) "you will have to put up with me! You are indispensable to me and I require you in attendance on me."

With those words, holding out his hand for me to kiss, he dismissed me.

Was it possible for me to raise any objections when my King with such great kindness condescended to give explanations where he only had to give orders? Yet I felt ill at ease and had a lively foreboding that the words "You will reform these abuse

I foresaw that every one who . . . . . win prestige and plume himself on experience which, even if it only existed in his imagination or was only assumed, would none the less be accepted by the King as valid and undo all the useful work I had been able to effect. I set



BERNADOTTE, PRINCE OF PONTECORVO  
*From an engraving by Bollinger after a painting by Rota*



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out all these considerations in a memorandum I transmitted to Graf Bose.

"You are looking at the black side of things, my dear General," he replied; but when I reminded him of the King's habit of mind and methods, he had to admit I was right. "But," he added, "don't you count me for anything at all? and do you not take my friendship and confidence into account?"

He kept his word, but he had only another six months to live. . . .

The Prince of Pontecorvo had brought on the scene his general staff of two generals, several colonels, staff officers, captains and subalterns. All of them, although the expense of their subsistence was borne by the Court, were in receipt of substantial allowances and, to screw them higher, had all moved up a step higher than their substantive rank warranted. This had been arranged before the King's return between Colonel Gersdorf, the minister, and Marcolini; the Prince did not concern himself with it.

In return, his Chief of the General Staff, General Gerard, persuaded him to apply for a step for all the Saxon officers attached to his Staff as orderly officers. Lieutenant-colonel Gersdorf headed the list of the latter because the Prince would not have Colonel Thielmann because he was "a creation of Davout's."

Thielmann came to me raging, attributed it all to the wire-pulling of Gersdorf, who was betraying the King and mulcting the country of several hundred talers a day in order to bribe Gerard and thereby to secure his own advancement. At the same time he disclosed the promotion of everyone attached to the Staff, of which I was to be kept in the dark. Among them were a crowd of young subalterns of the Carabineer regiment who had only received their commissions after Jena, and, since only a fourth of the regiment was mounted, could claim neither qualifications nor service, but by virtue of patronage had become officers of escort, of the guard, and on orderly duty on the Prince's staff.

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out all these considerations in a memorandum I transmitted to Graf Bose.

"You are looking at the black side of things, my dear General," he replied; but when I reminded him of the King's habit of mind and methods, he had to admit I was right. "But," he added, "don't you count me for anything at all? and do you not take my friendship and confidence into account?"

He kept his word, but he had only another six months to live. . . .

The Prince of Pontecorvo had brought on the scene his general staff of two generals, several colonels, staff officers, captains and subalterns. All of them, although the expense of their subsistence was borne by the Court, were in receipt of substantial allowances and, to screw them higher, had all moved up a step higher than their substantive rank warranted. This had been arranged before the King's return between Colonel Gersdorf, the minister, and Marcolini; the Prince did not concern himself with it.

In return, his Chief of the General Staff, General Gerard, persuaded him to apply for a step for all the Saxon officers attached to his Staff as orderly officers. Lieutenant-colonel Gersdorf headed the list of the latter because the Prince would not have Colonel Thielmann because he was "a creation of Davout's."

Thielmann came to me raging, attributed it all to the wire-pulling of Gersdorf, who was betraying the King and mulcting the country of several hundred talers a day in order to bribe Gerard and thereby to secure his own advancement. At the same time he disclosed the promotion of everyone attached to the Staff, of which I was to be kept in the dark. Among them were a crowd of young subalterns of the Carabineer regiment who had only received their commissions after Jena, and, since only a fourth of the regiment was mounted, could claim neither qualifications nor service, but by virtue of patronage had become officers of escort, of the guard, and on orderly duty on the Prince's staff.

The King had told me nothing about it because the active service Corps was not under my inspection. And yet I was expected to deal with these abuses.

I went straight to him, however, and represented the injustice to officers of the line regiments if all these youngsters with no service record at all were promoted over their heads, and insisted on the bad impression it would make on the morale and spirit of the others at the very outset of the campaign. The King became restive. He had not liked doing it, he said, but the Prince had insisted on it and demanded it expressly through Bourgoing.

I begged leave to be allowed, if only for my own satisfaction, to make representations to the Prince.

"Talk it over with Bourgoing first," he replied, "because he pressed it most insistently."

I went to the Ambassador at once. But he adopted a lofty and injured tone. Did I imagine, he asked me, that a Marshal of the Empire, a prince and a near relative of the Emperor, would have a personal staff made up of second lieutenants?

I represented my reasons, courteously but firmly, but there was no dealing with the man because he had been in disgrace once, and at the appearance of any French general was terrified of being shelved if he did not gratify his every whim at our expense. He did not intend to break his neck on a matter like this, he told me finally, so from him I went straight to the Prince.

He too rode the high horse at first. But when, without losing my head, I explained to him there was no question about his General Staff; that it was not the King's business to interfere with his staff, but left its personnel entirely to him; that I would undertake that the King would without hesitation confirm any promotion, any reward of services recommended by him in the course of the campaign, but that I begged him to consider what a bad effect it would have on the morale of efficient regimental officers on whom he would after all have to depend for defeating

the enemy, if all these youngsters who had yet to prove their mettle were advanced over their heads.

"Your Highness will be worshipped by the army; you are made for it; but you surely do not wish to take over command by countenancing an injustice."

He calmed down by degrees, then became friendly.

"But," he said, "what's it all about? Herr von Gersdorf told me that this sort of promotion was the custom in your army and that the King was only waiting for me to propose it."

It was easy to disabuse his mind of that, and he only jibbed because he had, as he admitted, promised Lieutenant-colonel Gersdorf his colonelcy.

"What your Highness has promised," I replied, "shall be done and, if you make a point of it, the other advancements will be made effective."

"No! No!" he shouted, stamping his foot. "They have led me by the nose and I am obliged to you for pointing it out to me. My first consideration is to gain the affection and confidence of the army. Go back to the King at once and tell him I beg him not to sign a warrant before I have had the honour of discussing it with him."

No one was more relieved than the King when I brought him this news. He wanted to have Gersdorf's warrant made out at once, and I had to remind him that Thielmann could not well be passed over. So both of them were appointed Colonels and Adjutants-General; the rest, for the time being, carried on as subalterns. But the Zezschwitz clan could never forgive me because their nephew, who in the October of the previous year had, as aide-de-camp to his uncle, become a captain out of turn, had missed his majority. . . .

I occasionally spent an evening at Prince Pontecorvo's. He always treated me with distinction. But he only grew frank and confidential when I called on him about the time of luncheon, which he never took.

I had to take a chair in his bedroom, where he was

engaged on his toilet; he dismissed his valet and he chatted to me for hours about the state of affairs in Saxony; about his campaigns and earlier events. He could not endure the Minister Cerrini, for whom he was always engaged, and called him a dolt. He disliked Marcolini and he regarded Graf Bose as an honest man but rather inclined to be pompous as a minister.

He had at one time, he told me, had an idea of asking the King for my appointment to his Staff, but he saw I was indispensable to him and he could not bring himself to deprive such a kindly sovereign of the only servant he had who was genuinely devoted to him. For if a French sous-lieutenant were to come along and to call upon him to place his crown at his feet, the others, with M. de Bourgoing at their head, would bring pressure to bear on him to comply.

The hatred he bore the Emperor frequently blazed up. But he as quickly regained his composure and spoke of him with great respect.

After the dissolution of the Directoire, he told me one day, Sieyès and its then leaders, realizing that only a military leader could save the State and stabilize it, had offered him the dictatorship, which he had refused because he foresaw that supreme power could only be enforced by ruthlessness. From that day onward he had discarded his uniform, had only worn a dark frock-coat and a round hat, and had only appeared on foot in the streets of Paris so as not to attract attention.

General Moreau, he thought, was a thoroughly upright man and was endowed with a genius for war; as soon as he was in command of a Corps he would become inspired like a master at his instrument; in other respects he was a mediocrity and anything rather than a genius. His good angel must have prevailed upon him not to allow himself to be manoeuvred into the Government, where he would have come to grief within the first three months. Energetic beyond praise in the field, he was the most indolent man in the world once he had no army under his

command. But he was the idol and the darling of the people, and the Emperor had never been able to forgive him that.

After Bonaparte's return from Egypt and before Brumaire 18 he had avoided him and had never been at home, frequently as the other had proposed to call on him. But one day he had met him by chance in the streets of Paris. Bonaparte at once stopped his chaise, got out, approached him with every manifestation of cordiality and said to him at last that he hoped he would not be against him.

"Neither against you nor for you," he had answered. "He will never forgive that."

Funck relates elsewhere another instance of this bitter animosity prevailing between Napoleon and Bernadotte which incidentally throws a curious sidelight on the battle of Wagram.

The Saxons suffered under the strained relations between the Emperor and Pontecorvo here. On the first day of the battle (5th) towards evening the latter observed that the village of Wagram could be carried by a determined assault. He sent to the Emperor asking for reinforcements for this purpose; before they came up, however, an aide-de-camp arrived who had orders to detach the regiment Johann and part of the infantry for some other objective. The Prince, in exasperation, immediately ordered an attack on the village. The König Regiment took the village by assault, but did not quite succeed in clearing up the Austrian sharpshooters, scattered about the farmyards and roofs of the houses. He then sent the A.D.C. with one of his own back to the Emperor with the report:

"Tell the Emperor I have won the battle. I have taken the village of Wagram. It is the key to the centre of the enemy position. The two flanks have lost contact. I shall attack the right flank and throw it back on the main army, but the Emperor must send me strong reinforce-



ments to enable me to hold the village and to put my plan into operation."

Instead of the reinforcements a second A.D.C. from the Emperor arrived with orders for half the Saxons to advance on another objective on the left. The Austrians counter-attacked at the same time and pushed the Saxons out of the village to the last line of houses on the outskirts. The Prince shouted in a fury :

"All right. He does not want to win the battle. But I am going to win it in spite of him."

He then ordered the Body Guards to attack, and they drove the Austrians out to the opposite end of the village, but were held up by a battery that had in the meanwhile come into position on the slope near the churchyard. The assault was costly and there was severe fighting in the byelanes of the village and in the farm-yards. Darkness was beginning to fall. Hartitzsch's brigade, moving up in support, opened fire on the Saxons in the village, mistaking them for Austrians; the latter returned the fire and General Hartitzsch was mortally wounded. In the general confusion the village was lost again.

The Prince rallied his men at once and held on near Aderklaa under enemy cannonade until the following morning. It was only then that, on the Emperor's orders, he fell back. Even after nightfall he had vainly launched two squadrons of the Garde du Corps against the battery behind the churchyard.

If his first successful attack on the village had been supported, the issue would have been decided on the first day. The Emperor then made him attack again, to no purpose, and kept out of his way, because the Prince, quite out of control in his rage, reproached him violently for the reinforcements withheld. It was only after Marshal Davout had outflanked the enemy's right at Markgrafeneusiedel that Oudinot's corps succeeded in carrying Wagram.

The Prince had a report published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in which he stated that he was master of Wagram

on the evening of the 5th. Army Orders contradicted this and attributed the honour of taking Wagram to Oudinot. Both versions are true. The Prince of Pontecorvo was relieved of the command of the Saxons, who idolized him, a few days after the battle, and was sent to Zeeland to turn the English out of Flushing. The Saxon troops were cheated of the renown they had fairly won and of the reward of their valour. It was only with the cavalry that had fought gallantly elsewhere that the Emperor expressed his satisfaction.

After this digression Funck, with his duties in Dresden, resumes his narrative.

We had reached Dresden in the evening of March 31. After a six months' absence I had a good deal to arrange in the way of my domestic affairs. My two sons were, the elder an officer, the younger an ensign, in the Body Guard; on my sudden departure I had had to leave them to their own devices; they had made a mess of things and had run up debts. They had now, though both of them were at the depot still, to get their outfit for the active service because the depot had to be moved from Dresden. I had got another appointment and therefore had to arrange for quite a new outfit and chargers for myself, to engage a staff and to organize my household on quite a different scale.

My duties entailed a lot of work and I had not a soul to assist me, because the Inspector's aide-de-camp had gone off and General Zastrow had taken the clerk to Leipzig with him. I did not know how to find the time to get through my work, as it was fully occupied by tiresome visits, reports, appeals, congratulations and so on. None the less, Marcolini took umbrage because I only attended him on business and did not hang about his ante-room which was a very dirty room, for an audience, for more than an hour every morning.

I had made up my mind to rid myself of this incubus once and for all.

At the same time as myself, but postdated to me, the King had nominated other officers to the grade of infantry brigadiers; among others, on my recommendation, General Zeschau; but in the teeth of my advice and under pressure from the Minister, General Boxberg as well. I ventured to tell the King that the man was entirely unqualified for his appointment. He replied irritably that I must have some grudge against him. So I held my tongue. But as the King pressed me, I said at last, "Because in that case your Majesty will be exposing yourself to the annoyance of Pontecorvo's refusal to accept him." He was appointed none the less. . . .

## II

### THE COURT ON THE RUN

WE had been in Dresden for about a fortnight when Thielmann met me in the street and told me that the Court was moving to Leipzig. No one had told me a word about it. Marcolini, who made all arrangements of this kind, did not think it necessary to inform a soul. You had to find out news of this kind for yourself from subordinate officials who gave themselves airs of importance accordingly. But I had neither the time nor the inclination to go hunting about for sources of this kind, so I went straight to him and asked him what had been decided about me.

"You are going with the King," he said, "and he is leaving to-morrow."

So everything had to be done in frantic haste. But when I called on Graf Bose, who had not been able to leave his bed, the latter wanted me to stay on in Dresden for a few days and sent me to submit his request to the King, who approved it.

Early in the morning the Court left the capital, and Pontecorvo left about noon after giving me a mass of instructions about the transport of artillery that had been unconscionably delayed and about the defence works being raised round Dresden.

I was relieved to have, at any rate, one day to myself.

But hardly had the Prince left the town than the mob got out of hand. They destroyed the works, held public demonstrations of rejoicing at the advance of the Austrians and left the artillery, awaiting transport, derelict. Except

for the depot of the Body Guard, consisting entirely of sick, that was to move out the following day, they had withdrawn all troops from the capital and had taken no steps for the maintenance of law and order or for the organization of a civic guard. During the evening noisy demonstrations continued in the streets and the pot-houses. Every one came moaning to me and overwhelmed me with their grievances, at their head all the ordnance officers, whose workmen had bolted. The Government, that had failed to take any precautions, had left; I hurried to Minister Hopffgarten—he had departed; to Minister Langenau—he sent for the chief magistrate and the burgomaster. Some labour was procured, but the citizens showed no disposition to form a guard or to furnish the necessary police patrols in the town.

It was only after I had pledged my word to recall some troops that they would undertake to do so for a few days.

On the following day, as early as 1 a.m., in a flurry of rain and snow, the Colonel moved the depot of the Body Guards out into the darkness and pushed on to Grossenheim. He would have reached it in plenty of time if he had moved out at seven o'clock and had not knocked up all his sick on their first march. Not a man had had a wink of sleep. He hardly succeeded in getting half his strength into billets and had to requisition a large number of waggons to bring in the rest.

That was the type of brainy colonel we had in those days! I accompanied my sons to the place where they had to report, and took leave of them for an undetermined date with a heavy heart, for they were both of them only boys; the younger was not quite fifteen.

As soon as I could make an appointment with Graf Bosc I hurried to him to inform him of the measures I had taken about the civic guard, which he approved and promised to answer for them to the King. I then intended to recall on my own authority part of the numerous depots removed to Borna, Zeitz, Chemnitz and elsewhere to garrison Dresden.

The rest of the day was spent in making all sorts of arrangements. I could not leave any male servants behind and had to trust to my housekeeper's intelligence if, as there was reason to fear, Dresden should be occupied by enemy troops. In the course of the night I left in a Court coach, paid a flying visit to my sister and my daughter in Wurzen, and headed back one or two infantry depots I encountered on the road, straight to Dresden. On the suggestion of Captain Langenau, with whom I had a conference at Meissen, I put Captain Brause in charge, and he acted on my orders though I had no authority to give them. He became Commandant of Dresden, restored law and order there and rendered excellent service.

The King approved all the measures I had taken and intended to draft the necessary orders confirming them. But the minister and Generals Oebchelwitz and Zastrow raised a lot of difficulties about the depots, which they alleged were not in a position to spare a few more units for the Dresden garrison. The real reason was that they had dismissed the men on leave to make a profit out of them, and both the minister and Oebchelwitz owned regiments, and consequently companies, which they had sent on leave.

It gave me a lot of trouble and meant many conferences with the King before I convinced him that this measure, the necessity for which he appreciated, was feasible. The strength of the infantry depots should have been between 4000 and 5000, but it took me all my time to scrape together some 400 men for the Dresden garrison. The depots of the Body Guard and of the dismounted men of the Carabineer regiments, Prince Clemens and Polenz, were stationed in Leipzig, the rest of the cavalry depots in Weissenfels. All the depots of all troops were under the command of General Zezschwitz, commanding the Mobile Corps, because they had omitted to transfer them to another command. As Inspector I was in charge of the Cavalry, Oebchelwitz of the Infantry; Zastrow, in his capacity of vice-governor of Leipzig, had really no say in the matter of the other troops, but he interfered everywhere, had the

entire support of the minister, and as he came in contact with the King every day to receive the watchword, the minister, by seeing the King immediately before him, contrived to arrange things for Zastrow to receive all instructions (while I was engaged in executing them), and then interfered with wholly contradictory orders after I had come to some final arrangement.

The King was well aware of this individual's incapacity, but because the minister was always pushing him under his notice, he raised no objections to employing him, and thereby doubled, when he did not quadruple, my work. Not infrequently they talked the King out of a decision he had already given and to which he had instructed me to give effect, and then were spiteful enough to keep me in the dark about it. After I had given all the necessary instructions and had reported to the King that it was done, orderlies from the commanding officers would come in to report that quite different orders had been received. I complained about it to the King, who was very indignant that the other three had not communicated his orders to me, and at once adopted the view at which he had previously arrived. I thereupon had to issue instructions afresh, and their effect was belated. However thoroughly I might convince the King of the futility of the measures these men adopted, I never felt sure for a minute that the same game that often drove me to the verge of distraction would not begin all over again.

Marcolini, who could not stand any one of the three, and called them dolts without more ado, was indeed on my side, but the war with Austria had depressed him to such an extent, because his son-in-law as well as his daughter-in-law owned estates under Austrian suzerainty, that he lost his head entirely, retired to his bed, and forgot all about everything that was going on, and acquiesced in every measure from whatever quarter it might emanate. I was therefore only sure of him for so long as I could be at his bedside.

It became necessary to organize a service of dispatch

riders between Dresden and Leipzig. We had, it is true, 400 or 500 horses in Weissenfels, but they were not remounts, for the most part two-year-olds from the Saxon stud farm that Marcolini had sold to the cavalry for four-year-olds, and a few old chargers for training recruits. I had as many of these as were wanted sent to Leipzig to allocate them. General Zastrow heard of their arrival before it was reported to me, for the depots had not yet been formally transferred to my command, and ran off at once to ask the King what was to be done with them. He was ordered to distribute them.

But the capabilities of this man were not equal to organizing a service of dispatch riders between Dresden and Leipzig. He therefore came to me under the pretext of discussing it. I gave him the villages where they should be stationed straight off, but he could not make head or tail of it. I wrote the villages down for him, but that left him no less nonplussed. When I told him three men should be sent to B. and ride to and fro between A. and C., he wanted to know how they were to get to D.

"C. rides to D. and to B."

"Well, I should have thought B. should ride to C.," and so forth.

I got tired of coaching such an incompetent person who could not even read the map of the country between the two towns, and begged him to let me deal with the matter. He was very relieved to do so after he had told me twenty times over how important it was and that he had implicit confidence in me. So I gave every rider a billet, wrote to the War Board about their rations and thought I had done with this trifling detail. But he had interfered and given the men other instructions after I had finished with them. And the very first dispatch was delivered at the wrong address because the men were incorrectly stationed.

"I thought," the King said to me, "you had organized a messenger service?"

I could not refrain from giving renewed proof what a mess was sure to be made of the least thing if he entrusted



one and the same errand to several persons. To get it straightened out I had to send for a N.C.O. from Weissenfels, give him detailed instructions in writing, and send him with them to Dresden before I got the important dispatch service in working order.

In this way the most trivial and simplest business was rendered difficult and, except for my secretary, who, it is true, could copy, but could not draft reports, I had no assistance. Apart from this, though I had a very handsome apartment, it was not in the least adapted from my requirements. I had only the one room for the purpose of bedroom and office. The main building was closed, and when the occupants of my house opened the door they always disclosed my whereabouts. I therefore had no chance, however hard-worked I was, of escaping any boresome caller, and the Saxon routine of "reporting" that still obtained became a regular plague. Every officer billeted in a village thought it his duty to report to me whenever he came into town.

Although I sent out regimental orders discontinuing this practice, they looked upon it as an act of courtesy on my part, and in return reported all the more punctiliously on this account. I could have taken a personal aide-de-camp, but the staffs of the numerous generals had so depleted the regiments that I could not have seconded a competent officer without causing grave inconvenience. He would too have had to spend the whole day with me in my room if he was to be of any use to me. There was not a hole or corner untenanted in the whole house.

The folly of leaving the depots under General Zerschwitz' command doubled my work. Every instruction, arising out of my duties on inspection, had to be copied out eight times for the eight regiments. I had to pass the contracts for rations and fodder as well as army clothing, including the "pattern," for eight units, discuss them with the commanding officer, the purveyor, the store-keeper and the War Board, have the contracts drawn up, issue the necessary instructions, and so forth.

All these matters were not a great strain on the intellect, but they took time, and were of supreme importance in the eyes of the persons concerned, who had no conception that an Inspector-General could have anything else to attend to. It was in vain that I begged the King not to go on leaving the depots under the command of an officer who was moving further afield every day. The minister represented this measure, which was quite in order under the regulations, as a slight to General Zezschwitz and the Prince of Pontecorvo, and in the upshot I only obtained permission to depute General Senfft, who was at Weissenfels, to acknowledge receipt of the several regimental reports about a dead horse, applications for short leave and the like and to forward them to me in a batch.

I suddenly heard from Senfft that a Royal order had transferred the command of the depots to General Zezschwitz senior, who was always at Weissenfels, and the infantry depots to General Niesemeuchel. This step was the outcome of a brain-wave on the part of the minister, but at the same time the chief command had not been transferred from General Zezschwitz, junior, who had not even been informed of the new instructions. The latter, who was in Plauen at the time and shortly afterwards in the Palatinate, continued to issue orders they had to carry out at the depots, gave instructions for officers and other ranks, and called for all contracts to be addressed to him and forwarded them to me by courier. The result of it was that we had another "proper channel" the more, in other words, another method for wasting time. The King was annoyed, but with his habitual good-nature made the excuse that the minister had rushed him into it, and he asked me to leave things as they were now that he had given the order. Fortunately the elder Zezschwitz was conscious of his weakness and was very glad for me to relieve him of all work.

I had dispatched officers to all the villages on the frontier to gather news about the movements in Bohemia, which kept on growing more disquieting, and had organized

dispatch riders to get intelligence at once. These officers served me well; but Minister von Hopffgarten kept getting wildest reports about raids from his civilian officials, as did Marcolini from his foresters, and I was being summoned at all times of the day and night to discuss them. Then I had to run from one to the other and attend the King, and when, thanks to my intelligence service, I could demonstrate the nonsense of theirs, the last thing always was:

"You might please write a line and send it by an orderly."

Marcolini found cash against my receipt, but I had to keep an account of all these small expenses, running into thousands, and keep the vouchers carefully if I did not want to become entangled in the most irritating meshes of red tape.

The worst bother I had was allaying Marcolini's apprehensive alarm because he did not believe the King was safe in Leipzig and urged a more distant flight persistently. Whenever I called on him he harped on it, and all my attempts to calm him down failed to convince him. It was idle to point out that I was bound to have news within a few hours as soon as any enemy forces had set foot across the frontier. That did not reassure him; he argued that an enemy raid could travel as fast as my dispatch riders. I gave him evidence that I had over 1200 infantry and a handful of cavalry, which I hoped to bring up to 400 within a few days, together with the requisite artillery, to fend off a raid. He quaked at the thought of any fighting even at a distance of several miles, and would have preferred to dismiss the few remaining troops rather than risk it. I represented to him that all the measures we had taken would be paralyzed if the King left the country, and the depressing effect it would have on the population. That did not appeal to him in the least.

When I asked him whither he thought of flying, he first mentioned Wittenberg, but apart from the fact that the King could not possibly run the risk of being besieged (that was the only reason for his departure from Dresden).

Wittenberg was not in a position to offer any resistance, and if the Austrians had driven us back so far we should be able to reach Thuringia and the Reichlands otherwise than by way of Prussian territory. Then he mentioned Guben, where the conditions were identical, and finally came out with his intention of taking the King once and for all into Prussian territory. In view of the very doubtful attitude adopted by the latter State, a step of this kind struck me as most impolitic.

But as I failed to wean Marcolini from his scheme, I had reason to fear that he might talk the King over in the long run and made up my mind to discuss it with him. He had so far not expressed his views on the subject to me and I was a little apprehensive that he might take offence if I opened it. I did so, therefore, very cautiously, attributing my insistence to my zeal for his interests, and rather unexpectedly he took it very well.

"Yes," he said, "it has been worrying me for some time that I have failed to reassure the Count, for I am quite of your opinion not to go into Prussian territory. But what place would you propose?"

"For the time being," I replied, "there seems to me no reason for any further retirement; should circumstances necessitate it, the view I hold of the Emperor's character is that it would be wise to trust him implicitly and to throw oneself into his arms. He looks on half-confidence and complete distrust as one and the same thing. Erfurt is a place that no body of troops advancing in the Thuringian forest could afford to leave in its rear. My suggestion would be to concentrate our depots under cover of this town round Gebesee and for the Court to go to Schleusingen. The King would be in his country there, and it would be easy to block the hill passes with a handful of troops. We should not lack reliable information there, and a raiding party would never dare as far afield as that, and would not, in any case, be able to do us any harm, while an army that had advanced so far as that would find more attractive objectives in the kingdom of Westphalia."

The King was in agreement with this argument.

"But," he repeated, "the difficulty remains to get Count Marcolini to accept it."

I was told to try my suasive powers on him.

Here, however, I had counted without my host. The roads to Schleusingen were much too rough for him, he would be jolted to death on them, an old man would never stand it.

"And our old Court coaches," he added, "are in such a bad state that they would all break down after the first mile." And yet the bill for repairs just before our departure had amounted to 1800 talers. Bad look-out for the Master of the Horse, I thought, but hoped I might yet be able to argue him out of his exaggerated fears. But he wailed like a woman and said straight out he would prefer to die than risk the jolting of such a journey.

"And," he said, "you no doubt look upon it as a mere nothing to move the Court about? It is as easy, in fact much easier, to mobilize an army. I must have a week's notice of it, I want three days for packing up alone, and I have got to see to every trifle myself. You have no idea of the burdens imposed upon me. I have to see to everything, do everything myself. The King must get away and make up his mind about it to enable me to make arrangements, and he must go to Guben. It's sand and flats all the way there; our coaches will last out that far. We can cross the Oder or move into Posen, the King would be in his realm and safe there."

It was easy enough to criticize the "safety" of Posen, because it was threatened by the army of the Archduke Ferdinand. Marcolini had to give up that plea, and he fell back on Berlin, where our ambassador Thuillaz would arrange for comfortable quarters and so on. As he quite failed to convince me, he went sick and took to his bed.

It was only later on that I learned on the journey, from the stablemen, that he had good reason for fearing the breakdown of the coaches. For he had planned an aver-

of exotic trees in his vineyard that had gradually perished. He had to have them felled, but no one would buy the wood, that was worthless either as fuel or as timber. So he sold it at a big price to the stables accountants, who had to use it for wheels, axles and the like, but the brittle wood splintered like glass at the least jolt—that was why the King had to travel on sand.

The arrival of Graf Bose, who, though very ill, at last reached Leipzig, afforded me at least the relief of not having to fight the Minister for War single-handed; but the sphere of my duties increased from day to day. I had to conduct the correspondence with Pontecorvo on behalf of the minister, who could not write a letter in German, let alone in French. I had to exchange letters with Colonel Gersdorf on the same subject-matter as with the French intendant Devismes in Erfurt, with the officer commanding the French troops in Westphalia on our frontier, and very often with Prince Joseph Pioniatowski in command of the Duchy of Warsaw. I first had to submit the drafts of the letters to Pontecorvo to the King, and then make a fair copy for the minister to sign, and always send Colonel Gersdorf a dispatch in French to communicate to the Prince, with a private covering letter. My secretary could not give me any assistance with anything in French. If one includes the correspondence with Captain Brause and the officers on the frontier, there was really plenty of work.

From the very first I had urged the necessity of keeping the depots up to strength on the King, because we had to replace the wastage of man-power in the course of the campaign by drafts. My three opponents stigmatized these measures as unnecessary because the shortage was very profitable to them. Even Graf Bose was talked round. Pontecorvo had begun to make inquiries, and finally Bourgoing appeared with a note in which he gave notice of his instructions to make inquiries about the third Division, which was to stay in the country. I again put forward my proposal to call up the supernumerary recruits, to put them into uniform as best we could, to arm, and to

drill them. I had nominal rolls of the cavalry drawn up, submitted them to the King and fixed the number of recruits every unit was to call up. At the same time I concluded contracts for remounts. The King approved everything and gave General Oebischelwitz the same orders as regards the infantry, but a few days later told me that they could not be carried out because the company commanders had taken the returns of the recruits into the field with them and no one knew where the recruits were domiciled.

I appealed in vain to the procedure in the cavalry, and to the general instructions that these records were always to be deposited in the depots, because the latter, not the regiments, drafted the recruits.

The answer always was, "But the minister has told me that that is not done in the infantry."

The news from the frontier began to become disquieting, and Pontecorvo sent a reminder that it was high time that something was done. Then the trouble became urgent. I pressed for the lists of recruits, and finally persuaded the King simply to issue an order that they must be produced.

Thereupon we got them at once.

In the meantime I concentrated a part of the dismounted cavalry in Meissen and Torgau, reinforced the garrison in Dresden, and succeeded with the able support of General Senfft in putting 200 horses from the Remount depot in the field. I threw out pickets into the Vogtland round Dresden and Zittau, to patrol as far as the frontier, and kept the rest in reserve. But, as there was absolutely no unity of command and every C.O. wanted to act independently, I pressed the King every day to send some one to Dresden as commander-in-chief of the forces on the frontier. He agreed at last, but would not entrust it to any of the generals at Weissenfels. I proposed General Barner; objections were raised to him—then myself; I was indispensable here; finally, Colonel Thielmann. After a good deal of hesitation the latter was appointed, and he overwhelmed me with reproaches for giving him such an inglorious errand.

"Can't you grasp," I said to him after a long wrangle.

“that that command may hold out the most brilliant prospects?”

Then he thought it over and was all gratitude. I laid the foundations of his good fortune; the sequel will show how he repaid me.

All this time I had been working hard at the organization of the Horse Artillery and had made very little progress, because all the authorities with whom I had to deal refused to co-operate. At length, with Bose's backing, I submitted the scheme to the King, who approved it. By a Cabinet Order he entrusted its execution to me. Then I had the officers with the army recalled from Plauen—for they had been taken all that distance away—recruited the gunners from the cavalry and artillery units, and sent for Captain Förstel from Dresden to help me to organize the equipment. The guns were brought from Wittenberg and the Koenigstein.

Commissioner von Watzdorf had collected a transport reserve of 1400 horses which was not being put to any use at Weissenfels. Watzdorf, it is true, was writing by every courier to have it sent on, but Pontecorvo would not have it because there was a great shortage of fodder, and the Prince of Neufchâtel would at once have grabbed these remounts for the artillery. I wanted to supply the teams and the saddle-horses from them, but the War Board refused until a Cabinet Order authorized me to do so. Then General Senfft obliged me by undertaking to muster them. It is not often horse artillery has been turned out with better teams or better mounts, and yet 187 completely equipped four-wheeled waggon teams were left in camp.

They worked at high pressure at Göhlis, where the battery was in camp. We succeeded in putting four guns in the field in a fortnight's time, and the whole eight within a month.

I had received a Cabinet Order both for this purpose and for acquiring 600 remounts, and was referred to the Board of Finance for the money. I wrote at once to the latter, but had no answer. The contracts were made and I wrote



again—again no answer, because the minister had omitted to issue a special rescript to the Board, and its traditions forbade it to recognize the copy of the Cabinet Order I enclosed. I complained, and Marcolini advanced the whole sum through Frege the banker, and all in Treasury Bonds, in spite of the fact that only the home contracts were payable as to 50 per cent., in paper, the foreign ones in specie only.

One day a horse-dealer, Haenschel by name, of Dresden, with whom I had failed to come to terms, came to see me and told me he had been sent by the War Board, and had a hundred horses for sale which he would let me have at the price of my other contracts. I reported it to the King and he ordered me to take them over. When I reached the market-place, General Zastrow was there before me and had begun to take over. As Governor he had heard of Haenschel's arrival before I had, had run off to the King, and had been commissioned to deal.

A knot of officers were standing about and looking on, and I heard their expressions of surprise at taking over blind, lame and thoroughly unfit horses. I overheard their whispered comments about an Inspector of Cavalry being on the spot and countenancing it. Nineteen horses had been taken over by this time. I had a look at them and saw that the officers' criticisms were justified. Then I lost my patience and asked General Zastrow on whose behalf he was taking the horses over.

"On behalf of the King, who has given me his express orders for the purpose."

"Very good," I replied. "But I refuse to accept them for the cavalry before they have been passed, in accordance with standing orders, by a Commission, and here are some blind and lame birds that go down to your account."

Thereupon his nerve failed him; he disliked the task, he explained; he did not want to have anything to do with it, and would leave the whole thing to me. With these words he withdrew. I then appointed a commission under a colonel, who with the assistance of a vet. began to take over

afresh in my presence. Of those nineteen horses, twelve were rejected as unfit; the dealer was inclined to become impudent, then offered to let me have a couple of handsome chargers cheap; but all that did him no good, so he produced sound beasts and the deal went through.

As soon as I had a sufficient number of mounts I handed them over to the Polenz regiment I had transferred to Leipzig for training, and rode out every morning before four o'clock to the cavalry or artillery, and frequently drilled the units myself, to let the officers see that in emergencies like the present it was impossible to stickle for routine, valuable as I regard it in normal times, but that one was bound to adopt the methods of team work. I never required more than a fortnight to break the horses in and to turn them out. It was on these selfsame chargers that the Polenz regiment distinguished itself in the course of the Russian campaign.

I had been watching Marcolini's little manipulations for some time, and on every occasion he contrived to make something out of it, and, if it only amounted to a few talers, pocketed them as cheerfully as if thousands were involved. I do not know positively whether he had an interest in the Haenschel-Zastrow deal, which meant taking over the lame, the halt and the blind, but I suspect it, because he approved when Zastrow was given the commission to take over.

Hardly had I taken over the remounts than Marcolini, who had hitherto been in bed sick, began to drive about the cavalry cantonments and note down the best chargers, with a view to earmarking them for the Royal stables. Unreasonable as this procedure was, I could not refuse the Master of the Horse, but I told the groom who brought me the list that I should have to have a quittance by way of a voucher.

But that was not the view of the Master of the Horse. I was to take in exchange worn-out grooms' mounts and draught animals that were entirely useless and often hardly worth ten talers a head,

On my refusal to take over the horses, the Count sent for me and told me I could weed out these horses at once, put them up to auction and replace them. But I stuck to my point and my refusal, for what was the King to think of my capacity if I were to sell animals I had taken over at 110 talers apiece at a loss of 100 talers a week later? And how, in view of the urgency of things, was my cavalry to be equipped if I had to surrender a fifth of the chargers? Of all the horses the Royal stables offered me in exchange, I only took ten or twelve which might serve as rocking-horses for quartermasters, surgeons, or farriers. As far as the rest they had selected for me were concerned, I insisted on remount prices. But these were too high for the Master of the Horse, although he was debiting the King with an average of fifty louis d'or for them, for this exchange was not to be entered in the books; that had been expressly stipulated, and my predecessors had always been obliging enough to acquiesce. So the cavalry retained its chargers; but in order to feel secure, I took the opportunity of requesting the King, when conversation happened to turn on remounts, not to take too many horses for his stables just at present.

"You ought not to part with any," was his answer.

Amid these preoccupations there suddenly arrived a dispatch from Pontecorvo, who was with the army in Bavaria, in which he called, not only for the regiment of Zastrow's cuirassiers, returning from Danzig and the recently organized horse artillery, but for all the cavalry depots as well. At the same time came orders to march, from General Zetzschwitz, who was still in command of the depots.

The minister to whom the dispatches were addressed took them straightway to the King and had no recommendation to make except to accede to them. Orders were at once issued to this effect, and I should have heard nothing about it if the minister and Zastrow had been capable of drafting a route of march. The minister asked me to do this, in a misspelt note. I called on him in great

surprise and asked what it was all about. He referred to the dispatch. I asked to see it. He had forwarded it to Graf Bose. I followed it up to that address. Bose had passed it on to Bourgoing, the ambassador, and was not a little startled when I explained to him the inconveniences that would ensue if we were completely denuded of cavalry, and how entirely futile it was to send these untrained recruits, as for the most part they were, on such a long march. He promised to put this before the King, and I implored him not to come to any decision in these matters without consulting me. He assured me on his honour that the minister had instructions to communicate any incoming dispatch to me at once, and was surprised it had not been done.

I then called on Bourgoing, but he had just forwarded it to Marcolini, and the latter had passed it on to the Cabinet. Two of its members lived up two flights of stairs, Marcolini indeed up three. Being announced wasted time at every address, especially in the case of the latter, who often kept me waiting half-an-hour or even an hour on the staircase, for he had no ante-room. All of them detained me, no matter how hurried I was. When I at last reached the Cabinet, its members had gone home and it was doubtful whether they would return that afternoon.

That was the sort of thing I had to put up with, although the King more than once repeated his orders that the dispatches were to be submitted to me very emphatically. On the arrival of every courier I had to run about for hours to get a sight of the dispatch, although I was the only person who could deal with it, because the War Cabinet could not read French and Bose's office was unversed in military matters.

I was frequently called upon to answer a letter without having seen it; the King told me what he remembered of it, but when I brought him the draft he remembered some further points to which the dispatch had referred, and my draft was labour lost. He stamped his foot in annoyance at the minister, but he did not put a stop to it.

No worker has probably had more difficulties placed in

the way of his work than I, for I had to run all my own errands because I had no aide-de-camp and no officer was available now.

I went to the King and summoned all my eloquence to represent the difficulties created by his malleability. We had to concede the battery, but the regiment of cuirassiers and the rest of the cavalry did not come under the convention and were quite indispensable to Saxony. The King appreciated the soundness of my contention, but said :

“What am I to do if the Prince demands the troops? I dare not refuse him.”

I then proposed that he should give me leave to explain my reasons to the Prince, and at the same time to send off half the horse artillery battery and to promise the Zastrow regiment.

That was at last sanctioned, but I had to write to the Prince over the minister's signature and refer to the letter I had written in my own name to Colonel Gersdorf. A courier was sent off in hot haste with these dispatches, and they were so far successful that the Prince accepted all our contentions, did not demand the cuirassier regiment, even left the horse artillery battery and two squadrons of Hussars coming from Poland, which were then on their way under Major Gablenz, at the King's disposition.

Thielmann, who had had news of these negotiations in Dresden—he had an informant in the Cabinet—wrote to me about them, applauded the line I had taken, and opened my eyes to the fact that the whole issue had been raised, not by the Prince, but by Colonel Gersdorf, who had hoped to ingratiate himself with General Gutschmid, who was designated for the command of the cavalry.

The events of the succeeding days showed how necessary were the measures I had taken. As soon as the courier had been dispatched the King felt reassured, allowed me to give the Zastrow regiment a few days to recuperate in a cantonment near Leipzig, and to temper the haste of the artillery's departure.

### III

#### SCHILL'S RAID

**T**HEN, on a report from some local authority, the news of Schill's adventurous raid became public. It appears to have been, in spite of Funck's intelligence service, a bolt from the blue.

It was late in the evening when I was summoned to attend the King, and I could only give very inadequate information about the enemy's strength, his objectives and the like. It appeared to be certain that his objective was Wittenberg, where our treasury, our guns and our munitions were stored. In all probability he had reached it by this time.

There were some 350 drafts in the town under the command of Captain von Wittern, a capable man, but too weak for the defence of a town fortified by a rampart only. Fortunately, Captain Förstel of the artillery had gone there a few days previously. I relied on him more.

Opinions at the King's conference were very divided—or, rather, no one had an opinion. Some held the view that the King ought to get away at once; others were anxious to negotiate with Schill; all of them were bewailing the disaster.

As soon as I had seen incoming dispatches, it was clear that Schill, who was reported to have cavalry and a handful of riflemen only, could not take the town if they did not lose their heads there at the outset. I therefore proposed to move the Zastrow regiment out and wanted to take

command of it myself. The dismounted cavalry were to occupy the bridges at Torgau and the other crossings of the Mulde. The Body Guards and the rest of the dismounted cavalry were to stay behind to cover Leipzig and concentrate on the guns of the Horse Artillery battery, which could be emplaced forthwith.

Everything I proposed was approved except leaving the King's side. Often as I insisted on the impossibility, without having reviewed the position for oneself, of taking adequate measures, and solemnly as I promised to return at once as soon as these measures were taken—on this point they were all unanimous and the King was adamant.

I then hurried back to draft the orders; they all begin with: "On the express command of H.M. the King——"

An intelligent report came to hand at last from Captain Förstel. Schill had only about 350 horse and something between 60 and 80 foot, but no guns. He sat down in front of the town and demanded admission under threat of an assault on the morrow without fail. Förstel had rejoined with a demand to inspect his forces, and they had exchanged hostages. Schill remained in the hands of the main guard, and his force defiled round and round a plantation to make it look four times the strength it was. But in the meantime they had turned the interval to account to get guns out of the barges on to the ramparts covering the gate. Schill was accurately informed as to the strength of the garrison, but believed the cuirassiers to be *en route* for Franconia.

Reports of the local officials were to the effect that about 300 were on the march to reinforce Schill, and a few hundred infantry as well, but in part without muskets; many were joining up with him in Saxony of their own accord.

I am only referring here to information that was subsequently confirmed, not to exaggerations of officials that often alluded to thousands.

In my replies I implored Förstel to hold on until evening, because the Cuirassier regiment was on its way. About four o'clock an orderly came in. I asked the man for the whereabouts of the spot where he had encountered the regiment. He had seen nothing of it. I had my horse saddled at once and galloped to Mockern, the village where the staff was billeted. I thought they must have gone astray, though I had laid down their line clearly enough. The acknowledgment of Colonel von Urlaub, a good man who had been severely wounded at Jena, attested its receipt.

Everything was peace at Mockern. As I was convinced they had moved out, I was on the point of riding on when we caught sight of a cuirassier in slippers. I learned from him that every one was still in bed and that no order to move had been given. I was thunderstruck. I hauled out a bugler and ordered him to call "boot and saddle" and to take me to the Colonel's billet. Major Morner met me fully dressed and confirmed the trooper's statement. And yet in my orders I had said, "Move out immediately upon receipt, before midnight without fail."

Five hours had been lost and the horses now had to be baited before setting out on an eight-hours' ride. At last the Colonel appeared. I went for him. He made the excuse that they had only just taken in fodder and he had had to distribute it before he could move out. I had to exercise a good deal of self-control to keep my hands off him. I dispatched orderlies to the villages of the sections and sent on an advance guard of 80 troopers under Major von Schönfeld. The Colonel remained apathetic—then he asked what he was to do about the fodder.

"How much have you got?"

"Three days' issue."

"Well, why the devil don't you know that you have got to take three days' supply with you? It's in every standing order."

Yes, but his commanding officer, General Zastrow, had given him orders not to issue it before to-day. These



were the minister's instructions, and he surely had to defer to them.

"And don't you know that I am your Inspector whom you have to obey on the spot or be placed under arrest? And did I not head my order: 'On the express command of H.M. the King'?"

"It is very awkward when one never knows whose orders one ought to follow. Every one issues orders and it is impossible to please every one."

"I'll give a word of advice. Take the orders of the man you are most afraid of, and I give you my word that is who I mean to be. By seven o'clock the regiment has either fallen in and is on the move or you are under arrest. You will find your instructions in my orders."

I left him to chew over those words and hurried back to Leipzig, where I poured my heart out to the King. He forgave me for losing my temper, was extremely angry about the Colonel and ordered me repeatedly and emphatically to enforce my authority. But neither the minister nor Zastrow was reprimanded.

I begged him to give me leave for just one day to set the machinery in motion. He refused that. "I can't spare you for an hour." I then besought him to authorize me by orders in writing to make the necessary dispositions for the troops. He agreed that that was necessary and promised to do so, but the minister contrived to obstruct them, and when I applied for them again, the King thought his verbal instructions were enough and I could communicate them to the troops in orders.

I then took another horse to make dispositions for the handful of cavalry and the small body of infantry I had left in the vicinity. I found the best spirit animating the company commanders and subalterns, but nothing but obstruction on the part of the generals and the staff. This was partly due to intrigues against myself, partly to the most disgraceful self-seeking. The regiments were on field service pay, which the company owners drew and feared they would have to disburse for some renewals too

if they moved out. They aimed at pocketing the substantial increments and keeping the troops in barracks. The pay per head due to the owner of a regiment amounted to four gulden a month per man, which accrued to them as table-money. Cerrini, the minister, and Generals Zastrow, Oebchelwitz, Rechten, Niesemeuschel and all the rest of them drew, thanks to the minister's astuteness, this pay within the country without providing subsistence for a single man, while the colonels in the field had to provide for the messing of their adjutants and others out of their pay. I represented this injustice to the King; he was very angry about it, and the end of it was that he granted the colonels the quite inadequate supplement of 30 talers a month, and the generals in the depots drew the active service pay and did nothing for it.

The day was spent in some uneasiness. Orderlies kept coming and going. I had ordered the troops to secure all ferries, and in cases when they could not place them under guard, to sink them. As early as the afternoon one complaint after the other came pouring in, couched in the most abusive language, that this, that or the other officer had had the effrontery to requisition a boat or to billet his men in a village without a commissioner's warrant. Hopffgarten, the Minister (of the Interior), made heavy weather about these complaints and called me to account. I replied curtly that it was open to him to take his own measures if he did not like mine, and referred the matter to the King, who, annoyed by the fuss, gave me orders once and for all to take no notice of it.

But I took the precaution of sending a copy of the movement orders to the District Commissioner to enable him to make out warrants subsequently. It was just as well I did, because the War Board later on contemplated taking legal proceedings for compensation and disciplinary measures against the officers.

But what folly it was in a moment of emergency to waste time on such trifles, but I mention it here as evidence of

the paralysis of our regulations at the time and the need for their reform. I shall never regret having instigated these reforms and it is not my fault that my successors abused them outrageously. If I had been privileged to complete the reforms, they would not have been oppressive, because I was only aiming at the absolutely essential, not at sources of inequitable profit for myself.

In the evening a sapper N.C.O., to whose dispatch Schill had agreed, came in to report that the latter had repeated his threats, but had finally entered into negotiations and at first had demanded 500,000 talers, artillery, muskets and ammunition, but had finally come down to 20,000 talers as the price of his withdrawal, and further was entirely at the disposition of his Majesty. In the event of refusal he intended to burn the town, and so on.

Hopffgarten was quite prepared to find the 20,000 talers, and I learned for the first time how important Wittenberg was to us. Apart from specie, over six millions in State Bonds were deposited there. They were what the minister was so anxious to redeem. But nothing would budge the King. Late in the evening another courier came in. Schill had requested permission to pass round the town unmolested, I answered at once that they were free to make this concession on the condition that he did not hold the bridge, which they were to cut behind him.

At the same time I sent orders to Colonel Urlaub to move on Dessau to intercept Schill there. I ordered the handful of cavalry I had in hand to join up with Major Schönfeld, and the dismounted men and the *infantry* which I had brought up in waggons from Dresden and Meissen by way of Torgau, to push down the Elbe. By these measures I hoped I should make sure of rounding Schill up if he should be stupid enough to cross the bridge and thereby to cut himself adrift from his supports, and so put an end to the trouble at a blow.

But before my orders had reached Wittenberg they had anticipated them. A second report in the course of the night informed me that Schill had crossed the bridge and

had taken up his quarters in the village of Prantau. Captain Förstel had kept him under observation, and as soon as he had seen that the horses were being saddled and there was no picket on the bridge, had rushed up a couple of guns, destroyed one or two spans, and brought up his artillery.

Thanks to his own ineptness, Schill was cut off from the 300 horse and the infantry following him up by way of the Elbe, and he could only join hands with them again by way of Dessau, if the Cuirassier regiment, 500 strong, did not outstrip him. With the first streak of dawn I decided to make another attempt to induce the King, as the danger was past and over, to allow me to finish off the job personally.

At five o'clock another courier came in from Wittenberg. Schönfeld's advanced guard had bumped into one of Schill's patrols, which had taken to its heels at once. On hearing of the approach of Cuirassiers, Schill had immediately moved off in the direction of Dessau. Wittenberg was relieved.

Schönfeld was only going to give his worn-out horses a few hours' rest and then keep on the enemy's heels. I at once sent my eldest son, who happened to be spending the day with me, to Hopffgarten with the news, and the old gentleman was so rejoiced that he embraced the lad time after time. I reported in writing to Marcolini and Bose, and then hurried to the Wardrobe to give the King a pleasant surprise on waking. As soon as he was out of bed he received me in his dressing-gown and unhosed.

"What is it? No bad news, I hope?"

"Wittenberg is relieved. Schill, cut off from his supports, is moving on Dessau."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the King, and was good enough to add that he owed it all to me. He commended not only my disposition, but my foresight in not allowing the troops to be drawn away on Pontecorvo's orders.

"Everything," he said, "would have been lost with the fall of Wittenberg, and I should not have known which way to turn. And if I had gone there or to

I should have run straight into the raiders' arms, and I could not possibly have allowed myself to be kidnapped by them."

I took the opportunity of reminding him of the really important services Förstel had rendered, because but for him it might have been a bad business. I also commended Captain Wittern to him and suggested that, as he was very poor, and handicapped by eight offspring, a grant of 1000 talers for him and the Cross of the Heinrich Order for Förstel. Both were approved, but subsequently amended in so far that Wittern got the decoration but no cash.

*I reported the further measures I had taken for rounding up Schill, and he approved them, without, however, allowing me to take part in them personally, although I foretold that Urlaub would let him slip through his fingers, as indeed he did. Schönfeld had caught up the rearguard in Dessau, and took one or two prisoners. The rest were rescued by the townsfolk, who hid them in their out-houses, barricaded the gates and let them out through back doors into the byelanes while they themselves thronged the main road to cover them; and Schönfeld had to withdraw from the town. The Prince of Dessau came to Leipzig a few days later to offer his apologies in person, and insisted on calling on me for this purpose.*

By midday the King had changed his mind in so far that he thought it advisable to build golden bridges for a flying foe. I therefore had to recall the troops and dispose them to cover Leipzig. Schill thereby had the opportunity of linking up with his supports and undertaking a raid on Halle, whence he finally switched off on to Magdeburg. His forces were being swollen day by day by supporters joining him from Saxon, Prussian and Westphalian territory, but he was short of fire-arms and of artillery and munitions as well. He would have found all three in Wittenberg.

Leipzig had, of course, for forty-eight hours, when Schill's well-behaved desperadoes might have arrived

before the gates at any moment, resounded to excursions and alarums, which reacted on Marcolini's nerves until he clamoured incessantly for the removal of the Court from the danger zone.

It did not appeal to the King, nor did it seem to me in the least necessary at this juncture. But because Marcolini kept on hammering about the burden the arrangements for the journey imposed on him, I proposed sending on the Princes to Langensalza or Schleusingen, while the King would stay on near Leipzig as long as safety permitted. This suited him, but Marcolini raised innumerable objections. The separation of the Royal Family would entail all sorts of financial difficulties. . . .

The long and the short of it was that he would not feel safe until he had put the Rhine between himself and the Austrians.

## IV

### LE ROI EN EXIL

**I**N the meanwhile the news from Dresden and the frontier was beginning to become more disquieting, and Funck thought the time had come for the removal of the remaining stores in the arsenal and ordnance at any rate to safety under the guns of the Koenigstein. This precaution was frustrated by one of those displays of red tape which he always loves to recount of the methods of the "old gang," with a dry, but appreciative, relish.

For this purpose I had dispatched Captain Tennacker's big waggon park to Dresden and had instructed him to salvage as much as he could. The War Board, however, did not approve, and, if you please, sent all the waggons back to Thuringia empty, whence, instead of at any rate supplementing the facilities for transport in the country for the retiring depots round Langensalza, they took refuge in the neighbourhood of Höchst. Thus a very heavy expense was incurred;—one hundred and eighty-seven (or possibly three hundred) four-wheeled waggons were left entirely unused, and that wholly and solely to enable the War Board to assert its right to retain the power of disposition over these waggons as long as they had not been transferred to the military authorities.

Consequently very considerable stores of muskets, equipment, cotton and 80,000 talers' worth of saltpetre, which might have been saved, fell into the Austrians' hands a little later on, and they found sufficient means of transport in Saxony itself to convey most of it to Bohemia.

The King was not a little wroth at this unpardonable conduct on the part of a provincial Board, but his unexpressed indignation was as far as he got.

One other precaution Funck took proved, in the event, to be more effective. He dispatched one of his own officers to Colonel Thielmann, virtually commanding in Dresden as Chief of Staff, with instructions to give him warning if the King's safety at Leipzig were seriously endangered.

Thielmann was one of Funck's recommendations to ensure the reinforcement of a septuagenarian Brass-hat of the Higher Command by an able-bodied active Chief of Staff in command of the Dresden garrison and the frontier forces. He was now clamouring for reinforcements. Funck, having fended off Schill, bethought him of the Zastrow Cuirassier regiment and gave it orders to move into the Dresden area, but met with pertinacious opposition on the part of the Minister of War and General Zastrow.

When at last I put it through, the Regiment was not more than 150 strong, and the minister sent me a snub in writing for having made a wrong return of its strength. I at once referred to the returns and found that it ought to be able to move out well over 500 strong. The Colonel, whom I invited to account for the discrepancy, made the excuse of sick men and unfit horses, for which I had made allowance in my return of its effective strength.

I investigated further, and it transpired that for every unfit charger and for every charger of a sick trooper, the Colonel had returned a sound man and a fit charger to depot, but had left the sound troopers of the unfit chargers dismounted. I gave orders, of course, to mount fit men on the sound chargers, but thereupon the number of sic -



rose so rapidly that I still had an effective strength of barely 150.

I realized then that it amounted to ill-will on the part of the Colonel, or rather of his Chief, and resolved to beat them with their own weapons.

I therefore put it to the King that in view of the many sick in Zastrow's regiment, their chargers must be badly looked after; and I obtained his consent to transfer the Zastrow chargers to mount the dismounted troopers of the Carabineer regiment. Under this treatment the sick recovered quickly, and in less than a week the regiment was in a position to move out at very nearly full strength, to the delight of its very efficient officers, and to the chagrin of General Zastrow and the Colonel.

The precise equivalent in the Napoleonic era of the precious word "wangle" has yet to be suggested, but, as bane and antidote, it is surely a pretty illustration of the thesis that the more all that changes the more it remains the same thing.

The trouble with Thielmann was that under a soporific chief, and virtually in independent command, he became too active, possibly by reason of a swollen head. He essayed a rather futile offensive on the Austrians, still hesitant on the frontier, and brought a hornets' nest about his ears. The enemy advanced in strength and Dresden fell into their lap like a ripe plum. Thielmann in full retreat was all but cut off from Leipzig.

Thanks to precautions taken, Funck had early news of the sudden change in the situation, and while he realized that the King and Court were no longer safe in Leipzig, he saw no reason as yet for the panic-stricken skedaddle on which Marcolini insisted. In his view the King still had sufficient start to retire with dignity by easy stages.

The King was quite of my opinion, but they urged his departure from every quarter. He had me summoned that same night and asked me directly whether I was prepared to vouch for it that he was running no risks if he were to stay in Leipzig until the following morning. I was endeavouring to explain my reason for thinking so when he snapped :

“I think, I think; that means nothing. What I want to know is whether you will vouch for it.”

It was impossible for me to do that, but I calmed him down so far that he made up his mind to stay until the following morning. But by this time everyone was clamouring for a night journey, which he disliked, and he therefore repeated the question and wanted a plain yes or no. Trying to dodge this, I happened to mention that he would probably prefer to hear early Mass before leaving.

“Nonsense,” he said. “I don’t want to hear Mass. It is quite unnecessary for me to hear Mass every day. But what I want is a definite answer. Do you or do you not vouch for it that I can stay on until to-morrow without danger?”

I risked it and said yes. His manner then became very cordial, and I had to take a chair beside him and repeat the steps I had taken and my views on the situation. He was very pleased with them and decided to start at four o’clock on the following morning if no worse news came to hand from the officers I had sent out.

I went home, but felt distinctly uneasy at having given my guarantee so boldly. Perhaps I should have played for safety if I had let the King leave before, but I had valid reasons for postponing his departure until the last moment.

If it had been possible to persuade the King not to go further than Weissenfels or Naumburg, I should not have kept him back; but Marcolini would not hear of that, because it took too long to prepare the palaces there for a night’s lodging for the Court. He raised insuperable difficulties at the suggestion, although in Poland the King had to make shift with country houses, and even after-

wards at Gellnhausen had to spend a night at an inn. If, however, the King, who was obliged for the first time to leave his realm in the face of a foe, had left before the urgency of the need justified it, the reproaches of the whole country would have been levelled at me.

The Emperor, who counted on the presence of the King of Saxony more than on the loyalty of his people, would certainly have taken it amiss, and in general it seemed to me to be ignominious to take a step of this kind short of the utmost necessity. I therefore preferred to take the risk on my own shoulders. True, I should in this case have to a certain extent to be the scapegoat, but I could not afford to gamble with the King's honour any more than I could with his liberty.

I could not, of course, sleep a wink that night after I had gone the rounds, and was glad when I was able to go to the Palace at 2 a.m. The King was up and was surprised that no news had come through from Thielmann.

While he was hearing Mass, Lieutenant von Staff of the Polenz regiment arrived. He had taken part in the engagement and was himself slightly wounded, but as he could not get through to Thielmann, had ridden back as soon as the Austrians had crossed the Wilsdruff line, cut the Saxon Corp off from the Elbe, and consequently was closer to us than Thielmann, who was forced back more in the direction of Chemnitz and Freiberg.

The King and Queen themselves talked to the lieutenant, and I had no choice except to advise their departure. The coaches were harnessed, the relays ordered, and we thus gained such an appreciable start that the King might quite easily have stopped at Naumburg and awaited further news.

But no flight could be headlong enough to please Marcolini. He had arranged beforehand to drive immediately behind the Royal coach, so all those under him as Master of the Horse, who had made the arrangements for the journey and for the order of the coaches, clustered round his coach. At all the stages the relays were drawn up just

off the road in the same order as the coaches were supposed to arrive. But we had hardly reached Weissenfels than Marcolini with his retinue, who were scattered up and down the convoy and required eighteen horses, hurried on ahead, and without allowing himself time at the succeeding stages to inquire for any particular relay reserved for him, he took off the leading teams everywhere and thereby caused the greatest confusion. The teams of six were split up, their numbers disarranged, and, instead of finding the horses ready at every change of team, everything had to be rearranged and redistributed, to the accompaniment of shouting and quarrelling, and not without a lot of trouble in the case of a convoy of sixty coaches. Several coaches were left without any horses at all and were held up. It was quite impossible to keep any order in the convoy, and when we reached Eisenach about eleven o'clock, Princess Maria Anna and the Queen's Woman of the Bedchamber were missing. They did not come in until three the next morning.

I received such good news from every quarter in Eisenach that I quite expected that we should call a halt here. The many missing coaches furnished another reason, and after I had posted the sentries and seen to everything, I went to lie down about 1 a.m., but was summoned to Marcolini an hour later. He had arrived before we had, had gone straight to bed and consequently felt rested. He told me the anxiety he felt about the insecurity of our position here, and all my representations failed to reassure him. He insisted on going on and only wanted to know a spot where we could stop. I had to give in at last and suggested Fulda. A groom was sent to prepare apartments in the castle, and Marcolini was then all haste to be off to convey his own person to safety.

We reached Fulda in good time, and the King was so pleased with his quarters in the castle that he proposed to spend a few days here and await further news from Saxony. The officers I had sent out to patrol the side roads came in the following morning. They had found everything well.

Anton Potocki, one of Prince Joseph's aides-de-camp, caught us up here with dispatches for the King. He had passed through Leipzig, and twenty hours after our departure had not seen an Austrian there. We could afford to consider ourselves perfectly safe, because even if the capture of the King had been the motive for the enemy's incursion into Saxony, a raiding body could not possibly have ventured as far afield as Fulda. Further, Graf Bose, Graf Hopffgarten and Baron Bourgoing were still somewhere behind us, and we must have had at least twenty-four hours' notice from the officers left behind at the several stages if even an enemy patrol had attempted to approach us.

Nevertheless Marcolini started off again about the danger because we had not come into touch with the army of reserve in course of formation under the Duke of Valmy (Marshal Kellermann). We knew as a fact that it was assembling near Hanau, but Marcolini had got it into his head that he ought to have fallen in with it at Fulda. And as he had to admit himself that we had nothing to fear from the Austrians here, he fell back on a raiding party of Westphalian insurgents that existed only in his imagination.

It was as late as midday before he had talked the King over into continuing his journey to Frankfurt that same day. It was no good my objecting that it was too late now to reach the town—he posted on ahead, and the King, after a hurried meal, was obliged to follow him, to the great disgust of the Princes, who liked Fulda and wanted to see its many churches, and of the Confessors, who had plenty of acquaintances among the clergy. The repeated orders for and countermanding of relays had given rise to a lot of confusion. It was not until night-fall that we reached Gellnhausen in pouring rain, where no quarters had been arranged. We drew up at a very uninviting tavern; in the winding alleys the coaches could not drive up to the door; the Princes had to alight in the rain and walk some considerable distance through the mud and puddles. The fourgons had not been able to keep

up, and the whole of the Royal Family were obliged to spend the night in their coaches.

Just before Hanau the following morning we encountered the first French troops, and in Hanau Marcolini awaited us with his satellites; he had hurried on ahead of us without stopping, and only began to breathe freely when he had an army in front of him.

As I knew Frankfurt, he had asked at which hostelry the Royal Family could with most propriety be lodged. I proposed the "Englisches Haus," but he had more confidence in Court Clerk Kindler, who not long previously had been on his trial for embezzlement and had spent a long time in prison. The latter deemed it more appropriate for the King to take up his quarters in the "Römischer Kaiser" (Roman Emperor), that was distinguished for nothing except its squalor.

An ugly saloon with glass doors on either side and decorated with a waxcloth tapestry depicting hunting scenes served as a dining-room. Opposite the entrance were three windows, and between them stood old marble serving-tables with carved feet that encroached into the room, narrow at the best of times, so that the attendants waiting at table could hardly force their way past. To the right of it was a room into which a convenience had been introduced among the old-fashioned chairs and tables, and adjoining it was the King's study, that had a second door leading into the wardrobe, where a bed for the valet on duty was put up. At the other end of the saloon was the same arrangement. The Queen was lodged here, and here too was the bedchamber. The Princes and Princesses were lodged in the same style one or two floors higher.

When the King was pleased to receive a visitor, the latter had to be ushered in either through the wardrobe or the room adjoining the saloon—after taking the precaution of draping the convenience with a rug. There was no room to take him through the saloon, where the deal dining-table blocked the way.

The suite, including Graf Bose and the other ministers, were similarly unsuitably and inconveniently lodged, and scattered all over the town; which did not make Funck's work any easier, especially as his hands were full with complaints from Napoleon and Pontecorvo about the bad equipment of the Saxon contingents. As soon as a dispatch came in, he had to chase after it from one minister to the other and retrieve it from M. de Bourgoing; the one person to whom the King never appears to have passed it was the *one man competent to deal with it*.

Possibly because he had become accustomed to it, he complains less plaintively of this than of the arrangements Marcolini had, at enormous expense, made for the discomfort of the Court. Although the customary horde of cooks, clerks, cellarmen and bottle-washers swelled the train as on the road to Warsaw, "the Count" had entered into a contract with mine host of the hostelry, by virtue of which the Royal table of some thirty covers a day was ill-served at the rate of three ducats a head. As a result, the whole of the domestic staff, from the master cooks to the scullions, had to be put on a subsistence allowance, doubtless "*pour le snurbs*," as Marcolini would say, an arrangement "under which," as the chronicler dryly remarks, "only those who had the honour of taking their meals at the Royal table fared badly."

Precious time was cut to waste in the duel between the usual obstructive tactics of the disgruntled Brass-hats at the depots and the intrigues of the younger generation, whom Funck's recommendation had promoted to command of the troops in the field; until a dispatch from Colonel von Gersdorf in Vienna brought the news of the battle of Wagram and of the sudden turn of Fortune's wheel it meant for Saxony, still labouring in Napoleon's

wake. The Memoirs conclude on a sudden note of relief:

Lieutenant Schuler of the Zastrow regiment furnished me with an opportunity of being the bearer of glad tidings for the King. He had been sent to Vienna and was the first to hear the news of the armistice of Znaim there. He hurried back to Frankfurt almost without drawing rein, to be the first to transmit it, and came in some twenty-four hours ahead of the courier General Zezschwitz had dispatched. It was about eleven o'clock at night when he reached my quarters. I forbade him to say a word about it to a soul and took him at once to the King, who was still up.

Thus the curtain falls abruptly in the Memoirs, at the moment just before it was about to rise on the closing scenes of the great Napoleonic drama. It makes it the more difficult to believe that he had of his own free will rung it down at this juncture.





## INDEX

- ADERKLAA, 246  
 "Administrator, the." *See* Prince Xaver.  
 Agdollo, Count, the mystery of his arrest, 14 *seq.*  
 Alexander, to extend his borders, 192  
 Amalia Augusta. *See* The Queen.  
 Ambassadors, mostly chosen from the chamberlains, 81  
 Anton, Prince (later King of Saxony), tried to dress correctly, 132; wears the Green Ribbon, 182  
 Aristocracy, going downhill, 65, 66  
 Army, filled by brainless pedants, 20, 21; Prussian system "swallowed whole," 20, 21; and 50 *seq.*; first sign of mutiny proves need of reform, 137, 140  
 Aspern, the battlefield of, 100  
 Auerstadt, Battle of, 119  
 Augereau, 102  
 Augusta, Princess, a dance with Davout, 229, 230  
     169, 191, 199, 206, 209, 215, 227, 228, 229  
 Augustus the Strong, 121  
 Authorities, curiously interlocked, 69  
 Auton, Bishop of. *See* Talleyrand.  
 Bacciarelli, his paintings from the history of Poland, 89  
 Balbiak, 86  
 Baltic, Allies as masters of the 141  
 Barby, exchanged for Kottbus, 94  
 Barner, Gen., 260  
 Bassano, Duke of. *See* Maret.  
 Bautzen, Frederick Augustus meets Napoleon at, 166  
     149  
 Bavaria, Prince of, 191  
 —, War of Succession, made a man of Frederick Augustus, 24  
     94  
 Bayonne, 111  
 Beausset, prefect of the palace, 176  
 Bellegarde, General Count, 13  
 Beloselski, Prince, 25  
 Benevent, Prince of. *See* Talleyrand.  
 Benisch, cook's confidant, 209  
 Berg, Grand Duke of, "Just imagine he has been overlooked"—but given Grand Cross of Heinrich Order, 182–184  
     172  
 Berlin, the Decree of, 107  
     16, 215, 258  
 Bernadotte (Prince of Pontecorvo), a misunderstanding explained, 239, 240; convinced by Funck, becomes his friend, 242 *seq.*; hatred for Napoleon, 244, 245–247; sent to Zealand, 247  
     113, 193, 241, 248, 249, 255, 259, 260, 261, 264, 266, 284  
 Berthier, Alexander (F i

- Neufchâtel), negotiations with, 83, 84; his character and work, 111 *seq.*; "an infallible day-book," 112; listens to Funck, 113, 114; made Vice-Grand Constable, 120; would deal direct with Funck, 152; given Cross of Heinrich Order, 183  
89, 92, 93, 101, 108, 109, 114, 115, 120, 121, 123, 145, 149, 154, 155, 157, 261
- Bertrand, Gen., Napoleon's A.D.C., 87, 88, 184
- Bessières, Marshal (Duke of Istria), given Grand Cross of Heinrich Order, 182, 183  
102, 176
- Beust, Graf, the Prince Primate's ambassador, 87; would do anything for a snuff-box, 93  
91, 92, 93, 205, 226, 227, 228
- Blomie, provides a depot of supplies, 212
- Blümmer, Councillor, a budding diplomat, 95
- Bober, the, 164
- Bohemia, movements in, 255  
75
- Bolza, Count, a converted Jew, 87
- Bonaparte, Joseph, 144, 282  
—, Louis, 144  
—, Lucian, 103, 144  
*See also* Prince Jerome.
- Bongarts, 176
- Borna, 250
- Bose, Graf (father of the Minister), a *grand seigneur*, 3, 4; dismissed by the Electress, 7, 8  
—, Foreign Minister, Funck joins his suite, 58; universal object of hatred, 60; his one mistake, 61; prevented from conciliating the troops, 62, 63; always right in matters of importance, 80; not opposed to the army, 81; aloof condescension to Funck, 83 *seq.*;
- elaborate despatches, 151; summons Funck to Cabinet, 161, 162; will not act without "orders," 181; invested with the Green Ribbon, 182; "you want to have my death at your door," 240; only another six months to live, 241; wants Funck in Dresden, 249  
71, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 93, 148, 149, 156, 157, 164, 168, 186, 195, 197, 199, 214, 215, 216, 222, 225, 226, 227, 244, 250, 259, 261, 265, 282, 284
- Böttiger, scholarly antiquarian, 177
- Bourbons, the, restored through Napoleon, 96  
111
- Bourgeois, trusted by the *roblesse*, 4
- Bourgoing, French ambassador, always afraid of giving offence, 147; excess of zeal, 148; what is his trouble, 152; the dictator of Saxony, 158; in foolish panic, 161, 162; impossible to deal with, 242  
155, 156, 157, 159, 164, 225, 244, 259, 265, 282, 284  
—, Madame, 227
- Boxberg, Gen., promoted, 248
- Brandenburg, the Mark of, 140
- Brandt, Chancellor, of Zeitz, *real* head of his province, 70; never forgiven by the old school, 72
- Brause, Capt., restores Dresden to law and order, 251  
259
- Bremen, 107
- Breslau, 142
- Brizzi, 90
- Brochowski, Col., a tiresome old man, 169, 170
- Brühl, his mischievous administration, 8

- Brunst, Col. von, virulently anti-French, 171  
179
- Brzeze, Polish Secretary of State, 195
- Bug, the, 111
- Büneau, Count, ambassador in Paris, first husband of "Sister of Loss's daughter-in-law's mother," 52
- Burgsdorff, Minister of Conference, a Herrnhuter, or Quaker, his death, 51
- Bürnaü, Graf, a refined Franco-phobe, 179
- Calabria, 111
- Camus, Gen., *chef d'état-major* to Berthier, 152
- Castlereagh, 110
- Catherine the Great, 193
- Catholic worship, emancipation of, 61
- Caulaincourt, Napoleon's Master of the Horse, give luncheon to diplomats and distinguished strangers, 89, 90  
92, 170, 172, 176, 180, 237
- Cerrini, Gen., governor of Dresden, and Minister of War, 185, 186, 237  
244, 271
- Champagny, Count, chief of Foreign Affairs, 120
- Charlemagne, 105
- Charles, the paralysed second son of the old Electress, to be given the throne, 15
- Chemnitz, 161, 250, 280
- Christian, the Elector, father of Frederick Augustus, did little for education of his children, 8; a paralytic, 9; after his death, 15
- Cionzyn, seat of the Prince Archbishop, 211, 214
- Clemens, Prince, 251
- Clergy, their luxury and display, 66
- Columbus, his egg, 96, 97
- Cosel Palace, 184, 185
- Court, the corruptions of, 18; its killjoy routine, 31; a collection of caricatures, 132; more difficult to move than to mobilize an army, 258
- Crossen, 208, 210
- Cuirassiers, suppress the mutiny, 140; Napoleon grateful to, 150
- Custom, soon acquired the sanctity of Law, 81
- Czartoriski, Prince Adam, offers Elector crown of Poland, 26
- Dalberg, Baron (later Duke of), his dinners, 92  
91
- Dambrowski, Gen., and the insurrectionary army in Poland, 146
- Damórowski, Gen., 87
- Danzig, 62, 119, 140, 141, 150, 151, 153, 160, 264
- Davout, Marshal, always maintained discipline, 101, 102; behaves with tact and moderation in Poland, 196 *seq.*; should he be invited to dinner? 214, 215; situation saved by his courtesy, 222, 223; gives a supper and ball, 224 *seq.*; a dance with the Princess, 229, 230  
97, 103, 216, 217, 219, 220, 221, 238, 241, 246
- Delphine, 24
- de Pradt, his stay at Warsaw, 114
- de Saxe, Chevalier, natural son of Augustus the Strong, 121
- Dessau, 272, 273, 274  
—, Prince of, 274
- Devismes, French intendant, 259

- Directory, the, 109, 244  
 Dittersbach Estate, bought and sold, 65  
 Dohna, Herr von, eminent publicist, 117  
 Doria, 94  
 Dresden in revolt, 249; order restored, 251  
     16, 30, 35, 57, 58, 65, 74, 77, 81, 89, 90, 121, 122, 133, 134, 148, 150, 152, 154, 164, 166, 167, 174, 178, 183, 184, 185, 194, 198, 199, 204, 218, 219, 224, 225, 230, 236, 237, 247, 249, 253, 254, 256, 260, 261, 262, 266, 272, 276, 277, 278  
 Dress, at Court and in army, must be old-fashioned and unbecoming, 132, 133  
 Duroc, Marshal, Master of Ceremonies, personal talk with Funck, 168  
     86, 89, 92, 166, 172, 176  
 Dziembrowski, Marshal, chief steward, a typical Saxon Courtier, 173, 174; what is always done (!), 174, 175  
     205  
 Eichsfelds, 117  
 Einsiedel, Herr von, carried his head over one shoulder, 183  
 Eisenach, 281  
 Elbe, the, 60, 272, 273, 280  
 Electress (mother of Frederick Augustus), tries to cripple her son in mind and body, 7 *seq.*; sexual pitfalls contrived for the King, 12, 13; scheme for using the King's wife, 14; scheme to declare Frederick Augustus illegitimate, 15, 16; "The She-wolf of Saxony," 16  
     9, 12, 31  
 Elizabeth, Princess, 169  
 Ende, Minister, dismissed, 16  
 Enghien, Duke of, his death, 111  
 England, trusted by the aristocracy, 60; and textile trade, 65; her goods cheap, 65; the most formidable foe, 106; Talleyrand wishes for friendship, 107 *seq.*; English to be kept out of Flushing, 247  
 Erfurt, offered to Saxony, 93  
     187, 259  
 Etiquette of the eighteenth century, 3  
 Eylau, the Battle of, 142  
     153  
 Feilitzsch, Col., 164, 165, 171  
 Felgenhauer, Gen., President of the Army Board, 71  
 Ferber, Councillor, of the Treasury, 94, 108  
 Ferdinand, Archduke, 258  
     — of Württemberg, Duke, 91  
 Feuillants, their principles, 25  
 Finkenstein, a mansion without a village, 154  
     150, 153, 159, 163  
 Flushing, 247  
 Food shortage at Headquarters, 152, 153  
 Forel, Commandant (Swiss, commandant of Knights of Malta), polished and gallant, 3; submission to the Electress, 7  
 Förstel, Cap., implored to hold on, 268, 269; his important services, 274  
     261, 267  
 Fouché, the rapacious Jacobin, 110  
 Franconia, 73, 268  
 Frankfurt, 282, 283, 285  
 Frederick Augustus—of Saxony. *See* the King.  
     — Wilhelm II, of Prussia, his part in the plot to declare Frederick Augustus illegitimate,

- 15, 16; will promise but not perform, 27; his generals, 97
- 98  
 Frederick William III, entered the war in fear of popular discontent, 73; believed that Napoleon feared prestige of Prussian arms, 73; might more wisely have made peace, 119; his armies, 126-128
- 117, 118  
 Frege, the banker, 262  
 Freiberg, 280  
 Freidrichstadt, 45  
 French, will not stand for resistance, thought resources of Saxony were inexhaustible, 67, 68; at Napoleon's Court, 95 *seq.*; think themselves cleverest people there are, 122; tactics puzzle the King, 126; their cavalry cannot ride Saxon horses, 145, 146  
 — Revolution, King's liberal views on, 25; ended by Napoleon, 96; suppressed by Talleyrand, 110, 111
- 98  
 Friaul, Duke of, invested with the Green Ribbon, 182  
 Friederich, Prince, the King's nephew, at last presented to Napoleon, 187  
 Friedland, the Battle of, 114, 120, 140, 166  
 Fronhofer, Madame, from Strassburg, vulgar and underbred, but influential, 33, 34  
 Fulda pleases the King and the Princes, 281, 282  
 Funck, Ferdinand von, on "the pre-revolutionary *noblesse*," 4; fully in the King's confidence, 6; just escapes "initiation" by senior ladies-in-waiting, 13; his relationships with Fräulein von Unruh, 46; attracted by Countess Marcolini, 46; admiration of Count Loss, 53; a man of the New Era, 54; the Memoirs perhaps a fragment, 57; "the man of the moment," 58; and the Peace of Posen, 58; watching "Napoleon in a hurry," 58; a curiously modern note, 59; dissatisfaction with the Peace, 59 *seq.*; vain hopes to secure reasonable treatment for "the People," 62 *seq.*; disgusted by profiteering, 59 and 64 *seq.*; the silence of genuine distress, 66; secures the appointment of delegates for negotiations with the French, 71; discussions of policy with Graf Lusi, 74; accredited diplomatic agent for Napoleon, 77; embarrassed by lack of proper information, 77; and Talleyrand, 77 *seq.*; his position at Warsaw an innovation that puzzled the King, 79; absurdities of his position at Warsaw, Napoleon's headquarters, 82 *seq.*; consulted on every occasion, but given no authority, 83; temporary coolness with Bose, 83; at the mercy of Marcolini, 83 *seq.*; and the Prince of Neuchâtel, 83, 84; no more than "a travelling courier," 86; presence demanded by Napoleon, 88; who remembers him at Halle, 89; secures the protection of Talleyrand, 91; daily intimacies at Warsaw, 91; Talleyrand and Napoleon wanted him as ambassador, but he would not push himself, 92, 93; hints from Talleyrand, 93; on Napoleon's generals, 102, 103; Berthier hears reason, 113, 114; Prussia might wisely have made peace, 119; what *might*

have happened, 119; to stay at Warsaw, 121, 122; leaves Warsaw, 123; never try to make a Frenchman think you clever, 122; best wishes from Talleyrand, 123; duties at Court, 124 *seq*; need for caution with the King, 125 *seq*, lessons of the Seven Years' War, 126 *seq*; proper dress for soldiers, 134, 135; stupid waste and delay, 146, 147; proves he had *not* misunderstood Napoleon, 161, 162, takes invitation to Napoleon, 166; Napoleon supposed him to be Minister for War, 168; prefers to serve the King without an office, 169; could write volumes on gau-cheries committed, 172; an example, 172 *seq*; insists on carrying out Napoleon's wishes, 181, 182; playing valet to Napoleon and the King, 182; carried out most of King's commissions on foot, 184, accompanies Napoleon to Erfurt, 187; would have chosen Bernadotte, 193; gradually gains the confidence of the King, 199; vexed at arriving before the cooks, 208; once more finds a way out, 222, 223, 224 *seq*; hated at Court as an innovator, 230, 231; explains Napoleon's military methods to the King, 235 *seq*; up against the Brass hats, 237; relieved from personal attendance on the King, 238, 239; promoted

Pontecorvo, 241 *seq*; his sons in debt, 247, 250, takes sister and daughter to Wurzen, 251; making Dresden secure, 250

*seq*; advises the King to trust Napoleon, 257; always answered "it is not done," 260; despatches continually withheld from, 264, 265; a bolt from the blue, 267 *seq*; not allowed to leave the King, 268; crying need for reforms, 271, 272; some prudent precautions, 277; secures some dignity for the King's retreat, 278 *seq*; over-ruled at Frankfurt, 283; the curtain falls, 283

3, 12, 16, 19, 21, 27, 28, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 47, 49, 222, 224, 236

Gablenz, Chamberlain, to convey letters to Napoleon, 82 *seq*, considered himself superior to military parvenus of French Court, 86, 87; his marriage, 87; has to obey, 229

83, 88, 89, 202, 204, 206, 207, 209, 211, 212, 214, 215, 216, 220, 227, 228, 266

Gagern, ambassador of Nassau, 91  
Galicia, Austrian, 154

Gambling, in real estate, 65;  
in corn and wool, 65

Gebesee, 237

Gellnhausen, in pouring rain, 282, 283

280

Gerard, Gen., Chief of General Staff, 241

Germany, Duke of Weimar fancied himself the Saviour of, 145

67, 75

Gersdorf, Chamberlain, to convey letters to Napoleon, 82; his ill health, 85; "a Man of Law," 89; could not speak a word of French, 179; promoted, 241

86, 88, 169, 239, 241, 259.

266, 284

Glatz, 140, 164

- Globig, Herr von, appointed ambassador at Headquarters, 95; his character, 122, 123; to Berlin, 123  
169
- Glogau, wine, 212
- Göhlis, 261
- Görlitz, 149
- Götzen, Graf, a well-informed aide-de-camp, 74; adapted himself to Saxon Court, 74; the incident of a map, 74, 75; in command at Galtz, 140, 141  
143
- Government—and the People, 61, 62
- Grafenreuth of Bavaria, Herr, 91
- Grant, Miss, wife of Talleyrand, 109
- Grillenburger, 185
- Guben, 208, 258, 273
- Gumpfenberg, Fräulein, lady-in-waiting to the Queen, 205
- Gutschmid, groom of the Chamber, his influence on Frederick Augustus, *seq.*; preference for mediocrity, 12; "a timid little bookworm," 19; controls finance, 22; his wait-and-see policy, 27; shortcomings of his system, 69; puffed up with vanity, 221, 222,  
6, 11, 16, 17, 24, 62, 68, 75, 204, 205, 221, 227, 266
- Gutschmid-Marcolini regime, 62
- Haenschel, a dishonest horse-dealer, 262, 263
- Halbau, 75
- Halle, 89, 274
- Hamburg, 107
- Hanau, 283
- Hanover, restoration of, 108  
73, 74
- Hapsburg, House of—to be deposed, 105
- Hardenberg, 110
- Hartitzsch, Gen., mortally wounded, 246
- Harz, the, 75
- Haugk, cellar-man, 203
- Hedenus, Court Surgeon, 206
- Hédonville, Gen., 144
- Heinrichsorden, Grand Crosses of, 181
- Helder, the, 111
- Herrnhuters, the influence of the, 160
- Herz, Pater, honest but narrow-minded, 8; examines Count Agdollo, 16
- Hessen, 94
- Höchst, 276
- Hohenlohe, Prince, 74, 75
- Hopffgarten, Count, opposed to Count Bose, 63; receives the wildest reports, 256  
71, 72, 250, 271, 272, 273, 282
- Hubertusburg, the Peace of, 128
- Humboldt, 74
- Hungary, 27
- Istria, Duke of. *See* Marshal Bessières.
- Jacobins, loathed by the Elector, 25; supported by Napoleon, 95  
110
- Jena, the Battle of, 51, 53, 57, 74, 75, 113, 119, 129, 133, 142  
89, 138, 241
- Jérôme, Prince, his Corps, 62; his ambition, 141; frivolous and irresponsible, 144; impossible demands for reinforcements, 149; invested with the Green Ribbon, 182  
103, 151, 161, 163, 183, 184
- Joseph II, Emperor, his part in the plot to dethrone Frederick Augustus, 15, 16
- Josepha, Princess, 220
- Just, Baron, 169, 170



Kalisch, 145  
 Kalkenruth, old, 192  
 Kant, fighting round, 160  
 Karge, 211  
 Karl, Prince, Duke of Courland, 121  
 Kellerman, Marshal *See* Duke of Valmy  
 Kettelhodt, Herr von, Schwarzenburg agent, 79  
 Kindler, Court clerk, 283  
 King, the, of Saxony (Frederick Augustus), "the Elector," "a full length portrait," 3 *seq*, did not seek advisers only from the aristocracy, 4, his education, 5, assumes that Law cannot be evaded, 6, moral and religious, 7, health ruined by the Electress, 7, 8, tyranny of the clerics, 8, as a boy saw little of his father, 8, taught to "use his legs," 9, excess of modesty and distrust of himself, 10, never tricked into an act of injustice, 11, regards officials as infallible, 11, 12, resists sexual pitfalls contrived by his mother, 12, 13, his wife, 13, 14, Electress scheme to declare him illegitimate, 15, 16, kept busy with unimportant work, 16 *seq*, corruptions of the Court, 18, his "fine military judgment," 19, to follow the chase two days a week, 22, 23, only followed for sake of health, 22, everything a "duty," 23 *seq*; read the classics, 24, other serious works, never novels, 24, made a man by Bavarian War of Succession, 24, liberal views on French Revolution, 25, attitude towards Poland, 26, 27, offer to declare his daughter heir to throne of Poland, 26;

his prudent hesitation fully justified, 27, always a great gentleman, 28, growing more human every day, 33, to be "a king in a cotton shirt," 39, an incident of the left stirrup, 42, 43, coffee and chocolate, 43, 44, regarded the people as children, or automatic machines, 62, the Constitution as inviolable, 62, celebrated in camp fire ditties, 63, argues with desire to be convinced, 71, too much "tutored" to be independent, 75 *seq*, escaped domination of Prussia, for subjection to Napoleon, 76, puzzled by innovations, 79, Napoleon enquires after, 89, only knows what he is officially told, through proper channels, 95, never found out anything for himself, 123, but had sound political opinions, 125, could not understand French tactics, 126, admits himself behind the times, 131, upset by news of the mutiny, 140, 141, over ruled by officialism, 146, 147, panic fear of Napoleon's displeasure, 148, does not like short cuts, 152, asked to deal direct with Napoleon, 155, 156, upset by defeat, 161 *seq*, always had himself well in hand, 162, meeting with Napoleon, 166, finds Napoleon a genial companion, 167, likes Napoleon's ways, 175, wishes to act but dare not without "orders," 181, exchange of decorations with Napoleon, 181, 182, advised to ask for cordon of the Legion of Honour, 181, to be offered Poland, 191 *seq*, personal dignity covers the

- blunders of the Court, 195;  
 hard at work over his new  
 realm, 195; quick grasp of  
 Polish language and affairs,  
 195 *seq.*; never struck the right  
 note with Marshal Davout, 197,  
 198; gives a totally false im-  
 pression of himself, 200; says  
 something pleasant to every-  
 body, 201; an excellent lin-  
 guist, 201; dislikes, but cannot  
 escape, the chains of traditional  
 etiquette, 224 *seq.*; his dignity  
 ruined!, 226; understands, but  
 will not act, 231, 232; turns to  
 Funck when tangled in or-  
 ganization of Polish army, 235;  
 provided with a well-cut uni-  
 form, 256; approves measures  
 taken by Funck, 251; knew  
 Zastrow was a fool, 252; grave  
 fears for his safety, 256 *seq.*;  
 had to travel on sand, 259; dare  
 not act, 266; will not allow  
 Funck to leave him, 268; good  
 news, 273, 274; must retreat  
 —with dignity, 278 *seq.*;  
 delighted with Fulda, 281,  
 282  
     16, 19, 21, 24, 30, 32, 39, 41,  
     47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 57, 62, 71, 77,  
     80, 82, 84, 85, 105, 106, 124,  
     130, 134, 139, 140, 145, 151,  
     152, 156, 157, 158, 163, 165,  
     168, 173, 204, 206, 207, 209,  
     218, 219, 220, 240, 241, 242,  
     243, 249, 253, 259, 264, 265,  
     270, 280  
 Klemm, head groom, 42, 43  
 "König" Cuirassier Regiment,  
     the, 62  
 Koenigsberg, 142, 143  
 Koenigstein, for the arsenal and  
     ordinance, 276  
     261  
 Kolberg, 141, 142  
 Köhler, Inspector, 177  
 Kottbus, received, at a loss, in  
     exchange, 94  
 Kreisslig, Court Physician, 206  
 Krusemark, Herr von, 118  
 Kürst, gendarme, 208  
 La Besnadière, a man of influence,  
     92  
     94, 117, 149, 186, 191  
 La Rivière, a secretary of Lega-  
     tion, 52  
 La Tour-Maubourg, Gen., 102  
 La Tremouille, the Dukes of, 109  
 La Velotière, Napolcon's Master  
     of the Horse, 176  
 Langenau, Minister, 239, 250  
 Langensalza, 275, 276  
 Lausitz, the, two larger, distin-  
     guished, units, 70, 71; claimed  
     for Prussia, 73, 75  
     160  
 Lawyer, competent for any de-  
     partment, 22; always the ulti-  
     mate authority, 69  
 Le Jeune, an officer of Napoleon,  
     122  
 League, the, 145, 151  
 League of the Rhine, created by  
     Talleyrand, 105, 106  
     77, 79  
 Lefèbvre, Marshal, 102, 103, 150  
 Lefèbvre-Desnouettes [or Gen.  
     Lefèbvre], his headlong valour,  
     144, 145; really the person to  
     blame, 163  
     160, 162  
 Leipzig, memorandum on trade  
     of, 107, 108; Court moving to,  
     249  
     40, 161, 247, 251, 253, 256,  
     259, 263, 266, 268, 274, 275,  
     277, 278, 282  
 Lemarrais, Gen., 106  
 Leopold II, only interested in  
     peace of his own Empire, 27  
 Liebert, Gen., Commandant, 86  
 Liegnitz, 149

- Local authorities, kept their heads, with reasonable intelligence, 68
- Lombardy, 108
- Loss, Count, Minister of Foreign Affairs, his "grand manner," 51 *seq.*, indignant at a relative's marriage with late husband's secretary, 52, regards new Empire as an abomination, 52, always true to himself, 53
- 51
- Madame de, her aversion to all things French, 53
- Louis Ferdinand, Prince, head of revolutionary faction in Prussia, 73
- Louis XIV, his Court recalled, 3
- Low, Minister of War, "a simple, honourable soldier," 50 *seq.*, liked by Frederick Augustus, 50, a fanatic for monastic life in the army, 133, 134
- Luise, Queen, 192
- Lunéville, the Peace of, 73
- Lusi, Graf, discusses policy with Funck, 74
- Macdonald, 102
- Magdeburg, denuded of troops, 143
- 113, 274
- Malachowski, Polish ambassador, nephew of famous Marshal M., 26, 27
- , the veteran Marshal of the Diet, 224, 227
- Mameluke, the, 173
- Mansfeld, domains exchanged for Kottbus, 94
- Manteuffel, Privy Councillor for Finance, 71
- Marcolini, Count, the page, his influence on Frederick Augustus, 5, 6 *seq.*, no genius, not well educated, 6, supposed to be feeble minded, 8, 9, teaches the King to "use his legs," 9, how to "manage" the King, 10, 11, wiles to establish supremacy, 16 *seq.*, a coward, 19, thrashed by a subaltern in the Footguards, 19, wishes to drive out the military, 20, absorbed the Forestry and Chase department, 22, thrown into a swamp, 22, always the villain of the piece, 38 *seq.*, his avarice, 38, understood the situation during the Napoleonic era, 39, virtual ruler, many departments under his control, 39, 40, the "Poon Bah of Saxony," 40, the incident of "scrapped Court Silver" and sabretaches for the Hussars, 40, 41, an underbred Italian, 41, the left stirrup, coffee and chocolate, 42-44, very jealous of his wife, 45, his life a proof that dishonesty cannot bring happiness, 47, 48, on great occasions he always advised the King well, 48, 49, lack of courtesy, 77, sends Funck to Warsaw, 83 *seq.*, his secret horse-dealing, 146, 147, sick with terror, 162, unwilling to adapt himself to Napoleon's convenience, 174
- 175, strange choice of attendants for Napoleon, 180, invested with the Green Ribbon, 182, a blunder corrected 182, 183, one of his cheese parings 184-186, unlucky he did not attend the King in Poland, 193, his cheese paring, and secret profits, over the journey through Poland, 203 *seq.*, would soon have called the officials to order, 232, his approval must be obtained, 238, in saddle again, 238, admits his mistake, 240, never disclosed his plan, 247.

- retired to his bed, 252; will not believe the King is safe, 256 *seq.*; sold brittle wood to make wheels, etc., for royal coaches, 259; deal in useless horses, 263, 264; wants headlong flight, 280 *seq.*  
 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 24, 35, 36, 46, 50, 51, 62, 71, 75, 79, 80, 85, 90, 91, 92, 132, 148, 157, 158, 161, 168, 169, 170, 172, 173, 174, 176, 177, 178, 179, 194, 198, 210, 215, 217, 219, 220, 241, 244, 247, 262, 279, 284  
 —, Countess (*née* O'Kelly), her life and character, 44 *seq.*; friendship with Funck, 46; boasts of her husband's family, 46  
 Marburg, 57  
 Marc Ancona, the, in Rome, 46  
 Maret, Duke of Bassano, Sec. of State, his character and work, 114 *seq.*; the right man in the right place, 115  
 108, 109, 110, 111, 120, 121  
 Marianne, Princess (Maria Anna), sister of Frederick Augustus, 15; gains influence by her cleverness and wit, 34 *seq.*; tricked into an indiscretion and loses her power, 35, 36; her character in maturity, 36, 37  
 281  
 Maria Theresa, 15  
 Marienburg, 166  
 Marmont, 102  
 Masséna, victim of avarice, 102  
 97  
 Massenbach, Col., claims Saxon province for Prussia, 73  
 Maxen, 184  
 Maximilian, King of Bavaria, brother of the young Electress, his lack of balance, 29, 30  
 —, Prince (King's brother), wears the Green Ribbon, 182; and his seven children, 187  
 Medici, Catherine de, 13  
 Meissen, the china factory, 40  
 251, 260, 272  
 Memel, 117  
 Merchants, wail most loudly, 66  
 Metternich, 110  
 Meuse, the, 119  
 Mistress of the Robes, "a real *Cameriera major*," 30, 31  
 32  
 Mockern, 269  
 Moreau, Gen., a genius for war, 244, 245  
 Morio, Col., Jerome's aide-de-camp, invents demands from Napoleon, 161; impetuous but open to reason, 163, 164  
 Moritzburg, hunting at, 171, 172; 173, 174, 186  
 Morner, Major, 269  
 Morzinski, speaks only Polish, 211  
 Moselle, the, 119  
 Mounted infantry, 113  
 Mulde, the, 268  
 Munich, 8  
 Murat, Grand Duke, given Grand Cross of Heinrich Order, 183; in search of a guide, 184-186; Poles would have idolized, 193  
 102  
 Nansouty, Gen., 102  
 Napoleon, never intended to dismiss Low, 51; fusing aristocrats and upstarts, 52; master of Central Europe, 57; coming to Dresden as liberator, 57, 58; methods contrasted with those of Saxony, 58; his headquarters, 60; pose as deliverer of Saxony, 73; regarded as chosen instrument of Providence, 75, 76; not anxious to interfere in details, 77; wishes Funck to be present, 88; felt no respect for chamberlains, 88; a rubber of whist, 90;

affected by music, 90, breach with Talleyrand, 95 *seq*, his genius and his achievements, 96 *seq*, factions, only secret, against him, 97, pleased with his youthful heroes, 98, 99, his generals, 102, 103, to curb his lust of conquest, 115, turning point in his career, 120, thinks he can do without Talleyrand, 120, his method of attack, 130, mistakes of his opponents, 142, a poor opinion of Saxon infantry, 150, prefers dealing direct with Funck, 155, 156, cannot make mistakes, 161, his first words to the King, 166, regarded himself as the plaything of fate, 166, 167, charmed everyone who knew him personally, 167, no one with him who could speak French, 171, 172, did *not* interfere with traditions of Saxon Court, 176, the "decoration mania," 181, exchanges Orders with the King, 182, leaves Dresden, 187, his worst mistake in treatment of the Poles, 191, greatest regard for the King, 197, but dislikes the Poles, judging from reports of the conduct of Court officials, 231, 232, animosity of Bernadotte, 244, 245-247, refuses reinforcements at Wagram, 245-247, wiser to trust him entirely, 257

12, 39, 53, 59, 61, 63, 64, 66, 79, 84, 87, 93, 97, 98, 103, 108, 112, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 139, 140, 145, 162, 219, 236, 245, 280, 284

Naumburg, 279, 280

Neuchâtel, Prince of *See* Berthier

Neustadt, 184

Ney, 102

Nieborow, 214

Niesemeuschel, Gen., hard of hearing, 51

255, 271

—, regiment, 159

Noblesse, the pre Revolutionary, 4

Nordhausen, offered to Saxony, 93

Oberlausitz, regiments of, 159

O'Bryn, Frau von, lady in waiting to Princess Augusta, 206

208, 215

— Chamberlain von, 206

Oder, the, 60

Oebischelwitz, Gen., airs the grievances of the army, 139, makes difficulties, 251, will not accept new ideas, 260

162, 164, 237, 271

Officials, their infallibility (!), 11, 12

Officers, importance of their dress, 132, antagonistic to everything French, 160

O'Kelly, Count, a wealthy Bohemian, 45

— Father, quite poor, 45

One Year War, the, 130

Oppel, Privy Councillor, never forgave Brandt, 72

Orders instituted, 181

Oudinot finally took Wagram, 246, 247

Palatinate, the, 255

Pamphlets, and pasquinades, 61

Paris, 80

Parr and his wife, 90

Patriotism, the "Squealers" have none, 67

Persian ambassador, 91

Petty pilferings, 216 *seq*

Pillnitz, the royal Palace, the grounds of, 9, the attitude at,

- 26; a game of balloons, 32  
124, 173, 174, 180, 183
- Pilsac, le Baron de. *See* Herr von Senfft.
- Pioniatowski, Prince Joseph, Minister for War, 235, 259
- Pitt, English Prime Minister, 106
- "Playing at Soldiers," the harm of, 19
- Plauen, 255, 261
- Plotz, head forester, 208
- Poland, offer of throne to Frederick Augustus, 26, 27, 192 *seq.*; and the policy of Napoleon, 58; distracted, 101; quarrels with, from usual incapacity to waive ceremonials, 198 *seq.*; people dislike Saxons, 231, 232 106
- , King of, grandfather of Frederick Augustus, 8
- Polenz, Gen., on the march to Poland, 137; suspected—by his men—of secretly supporting the French, 140 25, 121, 251
- , regiment distinguishes itself, 263
- Pomerania, 143
- Pominski, prefect, 211
- Poniatowski, Prince Stanislaus and the billiard-table, 92 26
- Pontecorvo, Prince of (The Prince). *See* Bernadotte.
- Posen, the Peace of, dissatisfaction in Saxony, 59 *seq.*, 63 17, 62, 79, 85, 143, 145, 150, 151, 211, 212, 258
- Potocki, Count Stanilaus, 19 5, 227
- Anton, 282
- Prague, 8
- Prantau, 273
- Precedence by birth, 17, 18
- Pregel, the, 192
- Preissler, Father, 206, 210
- Profitering, disgusts Funck, 59 and 64 *seq.*
- Prussia and Poland, 26; her collapse, 57; her domination of Saxony ended by Napoleon, 58; her cosmopolitan policy, 74; an extended frontier (1), 75 39, 67
- Prussian army, its ridiculous monasticism, 20
- officers, their ingratitude, 60
- , General Staff, make no secret of *their* views, 73
- Pultusk, Battle of, 119
- Queen, The, Amalia Augusta, Princess of Zweibrücken, chosen consort to Frederick Augustus, her character, 13, 14; resists attempt of old Electress on her virtue, 14; and her brother, Maximilian, King of Bavaria, 29, 30; her ruin desired by all sections of the Court, 30; at first felt no confidence in her husband, 30; surrounded by spies, 31; a practical joke, 32, 33; driven to find relaxation in tittle-tattle, 33; Napoleon very attentive to, 169; has the sense to act, 228, 229; approves the King's uniform, 236 124, 173, 174, 175, 179, 198, 199, 202, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 215, 220, 227, 280, 283
- Rachnitz, Master of the Kitchens (later Master of the Household and Custodian of Buildings); a man of many talents, 176-179; lost his way, 208, probably not

- 205, 207, 211, 212, 213, 214,  
215, 216, 217, 221, 222, 223,  
228
- Radzinski, Prince, Archbishop of  
Gnesen, 211, 214
- Radziwill Prince, 214
- , Princess, 214
- Rautenkrone, Grand Crosses of,  
Napoleon first Commandant,  
181, 182
- Rechten, 271
- Regent, the, 107 108
- Reichlands, the, 257
- Reuss territories, 94
- Revolt of the troops, 62, 63
- Rhine, the, 119, 191, 273
- Robespierre, 52, 109
- Röder, Major, 74, 75, 81
- Rome, 46
- Rosenberg, 154
- Royal kitchens, hopeless extra-  
vagance, 177, 178
- Russia, will not show her hand,  
on question of Poland, 27, to  
be kept out of Europe, 105,  
106
- Rustan, Napoleon's Mameluke,  
187
- Saalfeld, 113
- Sachen, Minister, dismissed, 16  
80, 81
- St Cyr, Gouvion, 103
- St Helena, 184, 191
- Saldern School, the, 20
- Sardinia, Prince of, 36
- Savary, Gen, 86, 97
- Saxon Court, views prevailing at,  
84 *seq*; a snub administered  
by Napoleon, 88; real proto-  
type of S courtier, 173, 174;  
strange contrast to the modish,  
cultivated French, 180; can  
do nothing without orders,  
181
- Saxony, despised abroad, 18;  
"waddling along in potbellied  
equanimity," 58; consequences  
of Peace, 59 *seq*; will not  
admit that her misfortunes were  
her own fault, 60 *seq*; clamour  
for vengeance on the French,  
67; resources considered in-  
exhaustible, 68; cost of ob-  
stinacy, 68; reputation of  
being an "underhand cowardly  
people," 69; a superfluity of  
officials, 69, 70; folly of not  
accepting Napoleon's pretence  
that she only fought under  
pressure, 72, 73; excessive  
fawning on Napoleon, 73 *seq*;  
scrupulous conscientiousness,  
78; her diplomacy built on  
precedent, 80; as usual gains  
nothing, 186  
60, 68
- Schill, his adventurous raid, 267  
*seq*; finally switched off, 274  
272, 277
- Schirnding, head forester, 208
- Schleinitz, page of the chate, 171
- Schleiz, 113
- Schleusingen, 257, 258, 275
- Schlottern, a groom, 204
- Schmettau, 97
- Schnaich, fine decorative artist,  
177
- Schneider, Father (Pater), gives  
the best wine, 210, 211  
174, 206
- Schönfeld, Major von, 269, 272,  
273, 274
- Schuler, Lieut, 283
- Schwazburgh, Prince of, his  
business important, 95; still  
urgent, 123  
94
- Schwarzenburg, the Princes of,  
vassals of Saxony—their  
sovereign status, 79
- Secretaries of Legations, mostly  
young men from lower educated  
classes, 81

- Senfft, Herr von, ambassadør at Paris, should have been recalled, 79, 80; same person as "le Baron de Pilsac," 93; his able support, 260; his well-mounted horse-artillery, 261  
72, 79, 83, 84, 92, 94, 95, 123, 255
- Seven Years' War, *might* have been avoided, 119; the lessons of, 126 *seq.*  
8, 50, 87, 130
- Sieyès of the Directory, 244
- Silesia, French advance through, 140, 141  
143, 145, 151, 154, 164, 192
- Soldiers left to starve for economy, 127 *seq.*
- Soult, Marshal, 102, 196
- Staff, Lieut. von, 280
- Stägemann, von, Privy Councilor, 117
- Stolberg, Count, a captain in the Grenadiers, dares to "languish for" Princess Marianne, 35, 36; marries Countess Bolza, 36  
37
- Stralsund, 111
- Stutterheim, Gen., 15, 16, 80
- Suchet, 102
- Tacitus, 24
- Talleyrand (Prince of Benevent) on Marcolini, 6; and a despatch, 77 *seq.*; attention to etiquette, 86, 87; insists on presence of Funck, 88; gives protection to Funck, 91; breach with Napoleon, 95 *seq.*; no conquests left for France, 105; liked the English, 106, 107; Napoleon's "tutor in statecraft," 109; formerly Bishop of Autun, 109; married the English Miss Grant, 109; Balance of the Powers his aim, 110; too proud for duplicity, 110; Napoleon can do without, 120; Vice-Grand Elector, 120; best wishes to Funck, 123; accepts loan from Funck, 142; wishes Funck to deal direct with Napoleon, 155, 156; a hint conveyed to Funck, 181; never disclosed his views on Poland, 191  
79, 83, 87, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 107, 108, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, 121, 122, 147, 149, 150, 151, 156, 157, 158, 186
- Tennacker, Capt., 276
- Thielmann, Col., made Commander-in-Chief, to protect the frontier, 260, 261  
239, 241, 243, 249, 266, 277, 278, 280
- Thilo, a page of the chase, 205
- Thiollaz, Col., to be new ambassador—a good appointment, 121, 122  
148, 152, 155, 258
- Thorn, 150
- Thuringia, 147, 257, 276
- Tilsit, the Peace of, 118, 119, 120, 123, 166, 186, 191
- Tiszkewicz, Comtesse, her evening parties, 92, 150
- Totleben, Graf, a subaltern in the Footguards, thrashes Marcolini, 19
- Torgau, 260, 268, 272
- Tournon, Napoleon's Chamberlain, 173, 176
- Treffurt, 94
- Trützscher, a forest officer who spent his days in the pothouse, 185
- Tugendbund, 143
- Tümping, Marshal of the Court, a vulgar scout of Marcolini's, 179  
173
- Turkish ambassador, 91



- 205, 207, 211, 212, 213, 214,  
215, 216, 217, 221, 222, 223,  
228
- Radzinski, Prince, Archbishop of  
Gnesen, 211, 214
- Radziwill Prince, 214
- , Princess, 214
- Rautenkrone, Grand Crosses of,  
Napoleon first Commandant,  
181, 182
- Rechten, 271
- Regent, the, 107 108
- Reichlands, the, 257
- Reuss territories, 94
- Revolt of the troops, 62, 63
- Rhine, the, 119, 191, 275
- Robespierre, 52, 109
- Röder, Major, 74, 75, 81
- Rome, 46
- Rosenberg, 154
- Royal Kitchens, hopeless extra  
vagance, 177, 178
- Russia, will not show her hand,  
on question of Poland, 27, to  
be kept out of Europe, 105,  
106
- Rustan, Napoleon's Mameluke,  
187
- Saalfeld, 113
- Sachen, Minister, dismissed, 16  
80, 81
- St Cyr, Gouvion, 103
- St Helena, 184, 191
- Saldern School, the, 20
- Sardinia, Prince of, 36
- Savary, Gen, 86, 97
- Saxon Court, views prevailing at,  
84 *seq*, a snub administered  
by Napoleon, 88, real proto-  
type of S courtier, 173, 174,  
strange contrast to the modish,  
cultivated French, 180, can  
do nothing without orders,  
181
- Saxony, despised abroad, 18,  
"waddling along in potbellied  
equanimity," 58, consequences  
of Peace, 59 *seq*, will not  
admit that her misfortunes were  
her own fault, 60 *seq*, clamour  
for vengeance on the French  
67, resources considered in  
exhaustible, 68, cost of ob-  
stinacy, 68, reputation of  
being an "underhand cowardly  
people," 69, a superfluity of  
officials, 69, 70, folly of not  
accepting Napoleon's pretence  
that she only fought under  
pressure, 72, 73, excessive  
fawning on Napoleon, 75 *seq*,  
scrupulous conscientiousness,  
78, her diplomacy built on  
precedent, 80, as usual gains  
nothing, 186  
60, 68
- Schull, his adventurous raid, 267  
*seq*, finally switched off, 274  
272, 277
- Schirnding, head forester, 208
- Schleinitz, page of the chase, 171
- Schleiz, 113
- Schleusingen, 257, 258, 275
- Schlottern, a groom, 204
- Schmettau, 97
- Schnaich, fine decorative artist,  
177
- Schneider, Father (Pater), gives  
the best wine, 210, 211  
174, 206
- Schönfeld, Major von, 269 272,  
273, 274
- Schuler, Lieut, 285
- Schwazburgh, Prince of, 111  
business important, 95, still  
urgent, 123  
94
- Schwarzenburg, the Princes of,  
vassals of Saxony—their  
sovereign status, 79
- Secretaries of Legations, mostly  
young men from lower educated  
classes, 81

- Senfft, Herr von, ambassador at Paris, should have been recalled, 79, 80; same person as "le Baron de Pilsac," 93; his able support, 260; his well-mounted horse-artillery, 261  
72, 79, 83, 84, 92, 94, 95, 123, 255
- Seven Years' War, *might* have been avoided, 119; the lessons of, 126 *seq.*  
8, 50, 87, 130
- Sieyès of the Directory, 244
- Silesia, French advance through, 140, 141  
143, 145, 151, 154, 164, 192
- Soldiers left to starve for economy, 127 *seq.*
- Soult, Marshal, 102, 196
- Staff, Lieut. von, 280
- Stägermann, von, Privy Counsellor, 117
- Stolberg, Count, a captain in the Grenadiers, dares to "languish for" Princess Marianne, 35, 36; marries Countess Bolza, 36  
37
- Stralsund, 111
- Stutterheim, Gen., 15, 16, 80
- Suchet, 102
- Tacitus, 24
- Talleyrand (Prince of Benevent) on Marcolini, 6; and a despatch, 77 *seq.*; attention to etiquette, 86, 87; insists on presence of Funck, 88; gives protection to Funck, 91; breach with Napoleon, 95 *seq.*; no conquests left for France, 105; liked the English, 106, 107; Napoleon's "tutor in statecraft," 109; formerly Bishop of Autun, 109; married the English Miss Grant, 109; Balance of the Powers his aim, 110; too proud for duplicity, 110; Napoleon can do without, 120; Vice-Grand Elector, 120; best wishes to Funck, 123; accepts loan from Funck, 142; wishes Funck to deal direct with Napoleon, 155, 156; a hint conveyed to Funck, 181; never disclosed his views on Poland, 191  
79, 83, 87, 89, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 107, 108, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, 121, 122, 147, 149, 150, 151, 156, 157, 158, 186
- Tennacker, Capt., 276
- Thielmann, Col., made Commander-in-Chief, to protect the frontier, 260, 261  
239, 241, 243, 249, 266, 277, 278, 280
- Thilo, a page of the chase, 205
- Thiollaz, Col., to be new ambassador—a good appointment, 121, 122  
148, 152, 155, 258
- Thorn, 150
- Thuringia, 147, 257, 276
- Tilsit, the Peace of, 118, 119, 120, 123, 166, 186, 191
- Tiszkewicz, Comtesse, her evening parties, 92, 150
- Totleben, Graf, a subaltern in the Footguards, thrashes Marcolini, 19
- Torgau, 260, 268, 272
- Tournon, Napoleon's Chamberlain, 173, 176
- Treffurt, 94
- Trützschler, a forest officer who spent his days in the pothouse, 185
- Tugendbund, 143
- Tümppling, Marshal of the Court, a vulgar scout of Marcolini's, 179  
173
- Turkish ambassador, 91

- Unruh, Chamberlain von, author's father-in-law, 13, 211  
 —, Fräulein von, her relations with Funck, 46  
 Urlaub, Col., 272, 274
- Valmy, Duke of (Marshal Kellermann), 282  
 Vicenza, the Duke of, invested with the Green Ribbon, 182  
 180
- Victor, 102  
 Vienna, Congress of, 118  
 16, 284, 285  
 Vieth, Hauptmann, virtual governor of Dresden, 185  
 Vistula, the, 57, 60, 141  
 Vogtland, the, 260
- Wagram, Battle of, described, 245-247  
 284  
 Waldeck-Pyrmont, Prince of, his dinners, 92  
 91  
 War, the art of, 50, 130  
 Warsaw, and the Polish Constitution, 26; Funck's mission at, 82 *seq.*; the Duchy of, given to Saxony, 191 *seq.*; second visit to, 235  
 8, 79, 87, 90, 91, 113, 114, 116, 121, 122, 123, 124, 141, 142, 143, 144, 147, 149, 157, 181, 194, 196, 203, 204, 212, 213, 214, 218, 220, 222, 224, 238, 259, 284  
 Warthe, the, 59, 62, 140  
 Watzdorf, commissioner von, the Queen's letters to, 14  
 261  
 Weimer, Duke of, remission of Contribution, 93; centre of conspiracy, 143  
 Weissenfels, 251, 254, 255, 260, 261, 279, 281  
 Weser, the, 191  
 Westphalia, 67, 73, 94, 143, 259  
 Wierzbie, 211  
 Wilsdruff line, the, 280  
 Wine, hardly drinkable, 180, 181  
 Winterfeld, 97  
 Winzingerode, ambassador of Württemberg, 91  
 Wittenberg, the enemy's objective, 267  
 75, 256, 257, 261, 272, 273, 274  
 Wittern, Capt. von, commended by Funck, 274  
 267  
 Wredeck, Herr von, of Berlin, and the Dittersbach Estate, 65  
 Württemberg, King of, gets his own way, 156  
 Wurzen, 251
- Xaver, Prince, tyrannical uncle of the King ("The Administrator"), 7, 9, 13  
 Xenia, the well-known, 177
- Zastrow, Inspector-General, will not mobilize again, after the Peace, 146; makes difficulties, 251; accepting utterly unfit horses, 262; deliberate ill-will, 277, 278  
 40, 42, 227, 228, 162, 164, 165, 237, 247, 252, 253, 263, 264, 266, 267, 269, 270, 271  
 Zealand, 247  
 Zehmen, Privy Councillor, a discreet man, 16; made game of by the Queen, 32  
 Zeitz, the Monastery of, 70, 250  
 Zeschau, Gen., promoted, 249  
 Zerschwitz, Gen. Zastrow's

- A.D.C., 75, 164, 170, 171, 254,  
255, 264, 285  
Zinzendorf, Gen., Minister of  
War, 80, 81  
Zittau, 260  
Znaim, armistice of, 285  
Zweibrücken, 31  
—— Amalia Augusta, Princess  
of. *See* The Queen.  
Zwischau, Burgomaster of, pro-  
fiteering contractor, 72